

P O E M S

ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

BY

MR. JOHN GAY.

VOLUME II.

GLASGOW:

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THE CONTENTS.

E PISTLE to a lady.	Page 3
Epistle to the Right Honourable the Earl of Burlington.	9
Epistle to the Right Honourable William Pulteney, Esq;	15
Epistle to the Right Honourable Paul Methuen, Esq;	24
An Answer to the Sompner's Prologue of Chaucer, a tale.	31
Work for a cooper, a tale.	34
The Equivocation, a tale.	40
A true story of an apparition.	42
The Mad-dog, a tale.	47
The Birth of the Squire, an eclogue.	55
The Toilette, a Town eclogue.	59
The Tea-table, a Town eclogue.	63
The Funeral, a Town eclogue.	68
The Espousal, a sober eclogue between two of the people called Quakers.	72
To my ingenious and worthy Friend W——L——, Esq;	79
Panthea, an elegy.	81
Araminta, an elegy.	85
An elegy on a lap-dog.	89
To a young lady with some lampreys.	91

CONTENTS.

Prologue, design'd for the pastoral tragedy of Dione.

Sweet William's Farewel, a ballad.	93
The Lady's Lamentation.	95
Damon and Cupid	97
Daphnis and Chloe.	99
A Contemplation on Night.	101
A Thought on Eternity.	103
My own epitaph.	105
Dione, a pastoral tragedy.	107
	111

ne.
93
95
97
99
01
03
05
07
11

EPISTLES

ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

VOL. II.

A

EPISTLES

ON

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EPISTLE I.

TO A

LADY.

OCCASIONED BY THE ARRIVAL OF HER ROYAL
HIGHNESS.

MADAM, to all your censures I submit,
And frankly own I should long since have writ :
You told me, silence would be thought a crime,
And kindly strove to teaze me into rhyme :
No more let trifling themes your muse employ,
Nor lavish verse to paint a female toy :
No more on plains with rural damsels sport,
But sing the glories of the British court.

By your commands and inclination sway'd,
I call'd th' unwilling muses to my aid ;
Resolv'd to write, the noble theme I chose,
And to the princess thus the poem rose.

' Aid me, bright Phoebus ; aid, ye sacred Nine ;
' Exalt my genius, and my verse refine.
' My strains with Carolina's name I grace,
' The lovely parent of our royal race.
' Breathe soft, ye winds, ye waves in silence sleep ;
' Let prosp'rous breezes wanton o'er the deep,
' Swell the white sails, and with the streamers play,
' To waft her gently o'er the watry way.

Here I to Neptune form'd a pompous pray'r,
To rein the winds, and guard the royal fair ;

Bid the blue Tritons sound their twisted shells,
And call the Nereids from their pearly cells.

Thus my warm zeal had drawn the muse along,
Yet knew no method to conduct her song:
I then resolv'd some model to pursue,
Perus'd French critics, and began anew.
Long open panegyric drags at best,
And praise is only praise when well address'd.

Straight Horace for some lucky ode I sought,
And all along I trac'd him thought by thought:
This new performance to a friend I show'd;
For shame, says he, what, imitate an ode!
I'd rather ballads write, and Grubstreet lays,
Than pillage Caesar for my patron's praise:
One common fate all imitators share,
To save mince-pies, and cap the grocer's ware.
Vex'd at the charge, I to the flames commit
Rhymes, similes, Lords' names, and ends of wit;
In blotted stanza's scraps of odes expire,
And fustian mounts in pyramids of fire.

Ladies, to you I next inscrib'd my lay,
And writ a letter in familiar way:
For still impatient till the princess came,
You from description wish'd to know the dame.
Each day my pleasing labour larger grew,
For still new graces open'd to my view.
Twelve lines ran on to introduce the theme,
And then I thus pursu'd the growing scheme.

' Beauty and wit were sure by nature join'd,
' And charms are emanations of the mind;
' The soul transpiercing through the shining frame,
' Forms all the graces of the princely dame:

' Benevolence her conversation guides,
 ' Smiles on her cheek, and in her eye resides.
 ' Such harmony upon her tongue is found,
 ' As softens English to Italian sound :
 ' Yet in those sounds such sentiments appear,
 ' As charm the judgment, while they sooth the ear.
 ' Religion's chearful flame her bosom warms,
 ' Calms all her hours, and brightens all her charms.
 ' Henceforth, ye fair, at chapel mind your pray'rs,
 ' Nor catch your lovers' eyes with artful airs ;
 ' Restrain your looks, kneel more, and whisper less,
 ' Nor most devoutly criticise on dress.

' From her form all your characters of life,
 ' The tender mother, and the faithful wife.
 ' Oft have I seen her little infant-train,
 ' The lovely promise of a future reign ;
 ' Observ'd with pleasure ev'ry dawning grace,
 ' And all the mother op'ning in their face,
 ' The son shall add new honours to the line,
 ' And early with paternal virtues shine ;
 ' When he the tale of Audenard repeats,
 ' His little heart with emulation beats,
 ' With conquests yet to come his bosom glows,
 ' He dreams of triumphs and of vanquish'd foes.
 ' Each year with arts shall store his rip'ning brain,
 ' And from his grandsire he shall learn to reign.

Thus far I'd gone : propitious rising gales
 Now bid the sailor hoist the swelling sails.
 Fair Carolina lands ; the cannons roar,
 White Albion's cliffs resound from shore to shore,
 Behold the bright original appear,
 All praise is faint when Carolina's near.

Thus to the nation's joy, but poet's cost,
The princess came, and my new plan was lost.

Since all my schemes were balk'd, my last resort,
I left the muses to frequent the court;

Pensive each night, from room to room I walk'd,
To one I bow'd, and with another talk'd;

Enquir'd what news, or such a lady's name,
And did the next day, and the next, the same.

Places, I found, were daily given away,
And yet no friendly Gazette mention'd Gay.

I ask'd a friend what method to pursue;

He cry'd, I want a place as well as you.

Another ask'd me, why I had not writ;

A poet owes his fortune to his wit.

Straight I reply'd, with what a courtly grace,

Flows easy verse from him that has a place!

Had Virgil ne'er at court improv'd his strains,

He still had sung of flocks and homely swains;

And had not Horace sweet preferment found,

The Roman lyre had never learnt to sound.

Once ladies fair in homely guise I sung,

And with their names wild woods and mountains rung.

Oh, teach me now to strike a softer strain!

The court refines the language of the plain.

You must, cries one, the ministry rehearse,

And with each patriot's name prolong your verse:

But sure this truth to poets should be known,

That praising all alike, is praising none.

Another told me, if I wish'd success,

To some distinguish'd lord I must address;

One whose high virtues speak his noble blood,

One always zealous for his country's good;

EPISTLES.

7

Where valour and strong eloquence unite,
In council cautious, resolute in fight;
Whose gen'rous temper prompts him to defend,
And patronize the man that wants a friend.

You have, 'tis true, the noble patriot shown,
But I, alas! am to Argyll unknown.

Still ev'ry one I met in this agreed,
That writing was my method to succeed;
But now preferments so possess'd my brain,
That scarce I could produce a single strain:
Indeed I sometimes hammer'd out a line,
Without connection as without design.

One morn upon the princess this I writ,
An epigram that boasts more truth than wit.

- ' The pomp of titles easy faith might shake,
- ' She scorn'd an empire for religion's sake:
- ' For this, on earth, the British crown was given,
- ' And an immortal crown decreed in heav'n.

Again, while George's virtues rais'd my thought,
The following lines prophetic fancy wrought.

- ' Methinks I see some bard, whose heav'nly rage
- ' Shall rise in song, and warm a future age;
- ' Look back through time, and, rapt in wonder, trace
- ' The glorious series of the Brunswick race.

- ' From the first George these godlike kings descend,
- ' A line which only with the world shall end.
- ' The next a gen'rous prince renown'd in arms,
- ' And bless'd, long bless'd, in Carolina's charms;
- ' From these the rest. 'Tis thus secure in peace,
- ' We plow the fields, and reap the year's increase;
- ' Now Commerce, wealthy goddess, rears her head,
- ' And bids Britannia's fleets their canvas spread;

- Unnumber'd ships the peopled ocean hide,
• And wealth returns with each revolving tide.

Here paus'd the fullen muse, in haste I dress'd,
And through the croud of needy courtiers press'd;
Though unsuccessful, happy whilst I see,
Those eyes that glad a nation, shine on me,

EPISTLE II,

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE
EARL OF BURLINGTON.

A JOURNEY TO EXETER.

WHILE you, my Lord, bid stately piles ascend,
Or in your Chiswick bow'rs enjoy your friend;
Where Pope unloads the boughs within his reach,
The purple vine, blue plumb, and blushing peach;
I journey far—you know fat bards might tire,
And, mounted, sent me forth your trusty squire.

'Twas on the day that city dames repair
To take their weekly dose of Hide-park air;
When forth we trot: no carts the road infest,
For still on Sundays country horses rest.
Thy gardens, Kensington, we leave unseen;
Through Hammersmith jog on to Turnham-green:
That Turnham-green, which dainty pigeons fed,
But feeds no more: for * Solomon is dead.
Three dusty miles reach Branford's tedious town,
For dirty streets, and white-leg'd chickens known:
Thence o'er wide shrubby heaths and furrow'd lanes,
We come, where Thames divides the meads of Stanes.

? *A man lately famous for feeding pigeons at Turnham-green.*

We ferry'd o'er; for late the winter's flood
Shook her frail bridge, and tore her piles of wood.
Prepar'd for war, now Bagshot heath we cross,
Where broken gamesters oft' repair their loss.
At Hartley-row the foaming bit we press,
While the fat landlord welcom'd ev'ry guest.
Supper was ended, healths the glasses crown'd,
Our host extoll'd his wine at ev'ry round,
Relates the justices late meeting there,
How many bottles drank, and what their cheer;
What lords had been his guests in days of yore,
And prais'd their wisdom much, their drinking more.

Let travellers the morning vigils keep;
The morning rose; but we lay fast asleep.
Twelve tedious miles we bore the sultry sun,
And Popham-lane was scarce in sight by one:
The straggling village harbour'd thieves of old,
'Twas here the stage-coach lass resign'd her gold;
That gold which had in London purchas'd gowns,
And sent her home a belle to country towns.
But robbers haunt no more the neighbouring wood;
Here unown'd infants find their daily food;
For should the maiden-mother nurse her son,
'Twould spoil her match, when her good name is gone.
Our jolly hostess nineteen children bore,
Nor fail'd her breast to suckle nineteen more.
Be just, ye prudes, wipe off the long arrear;
Be virgins still in town, but mothers here.
Sutton we pass, and leave her spacious down,
And with the setting sun reach Stockbridge town.
O'er our parch'd tongue the rich metheglin glides,
And the red dainty trout our knife divides.

E P I S T L E S.

11

Sad melancholy ev'ry visage wears ;
 What, no election come in seven long years !
 Of all our race of mayors, shall Snow alone
 Be by Sir Richard's dedication known ?
 Our streets no more with tides of ale shall float,
 Nor coblers feast three years upon one vote.

Next morn, twelve miles led o'er th' unbounded plain,
 Where the cloak'd shepherd guides his fleecy train :
 No leafy bow'rs a noonday shelter lend,
 Nor from the chilly dews at night defend :
 With wondrous art he counts the straggling flock,
 And by the sun informs you what's o'clock.
 How are our shepherds fall'n from ancient days !
 No Amaryllis chaunts alternate lays ;
 From her no list'ning echoes learn to sing,
 Nor with his reed the jocund valleys ring.

Here sheep the pasture hide, there harvests bend,
 See Sarum steeple o'er yon hill ascend ;
 Our horses faintly trot, beneath the heat,
 And our keen stomachs know the hour to eat.
 Who can forsake thy walls, and not admire
 The proud cathedral, and the lofty spire ?
 What sempstrefs has not prov'd thy scissars good ?
 From hence first came th' intriguing riding-hood.
 Amid *three boarding-schools well stock'd with misses,
 Shall three knights-errant starve for want of kisses ?

O'er the green turf the miles slide swift away,
 And Blandford ends the labours of the day,
 The morning rose ; the supper-reck'ning paid,
 And our due fees discharg'd to man and maid,

* There are three boarding-schools in this town.

The ready offler near the stirrup stands,
And as we mount, our half-pence load his hands.

Now the steep hill fair Dorchester o'erlooks,
Border'd by meads, and wash'd by silver brooks.
Here sleep my two companions eyes supprest,
And propt in elbow-chairs they snoring rest:
I weary sit, and with my pencil trace

Their painful postures, and their eyeless face;
Then dedicate each glass to some fair name,
And on the sash the diamond scrawls my flame.

Now o'er true Roman way our horses sound,
Graevius would kneel, and kiss the sacred ground.

On either side low fertile valleys lye,
The distant prospects tire the trav'ling eye.

Through Bridport's stony lanes our rout we take,
And the proud steep descend to Morcombe's lake.

As hearses pass'd, our landlord robb'd the pall,
And with the mournful scutcheon hung his hall.

On unadulterate wine we here regale,
And strip the lobster of his scarlet mail.

We climb the hills when starry night arose,
And Axminster affords a kind repose.

The maid subdu'd by fees, her trunk unlocks,
And gives the cleanly aid of dowlas smocks.

Mean time our shirts her busy fingers rub,
While the soap lathers o'er the foaming tub.

If women's geer such pleasing dreams incite,
Lend us your smocks; ye damsels, ev'ry night!

We rise, our beards demand the barber's art:
A female enters, and performs the part.

The weighty golden chain adorns her neck,
And three gold rings her skilful hand bedeck;

EPISTLES.

13

Smooth o'er our chin her easy fingers move,
Soft as when Venus strok'd the beard of Jove.

Now from the steep, 'midst scatter'd farms and groves,
Our eye through Honiton's fair valley roves.

Behind us soon the busy town we leave,
Where finest lace industrious lasses weave.

Now swelling clouds roll'd on; the rainy load
Stream'd down our hats, and smok'd along the road;

When (O blest sight!) a friendly sign we spy'd,
Our spurs are slacken'd from the horses side;

For sure a civil host the house commands,
Upon whose sign this courteous motto stands.

' This is the ancient hand and eke the pen;

' Here is for horses hay, and meat for men.

How rhyme would flourish, did each son of fame
Know his own genius, and direct his flame!

Then he, that could not epic flights rehearse,
Might sweetly mourn in elegiac verse.

But were his muse for elegy unfit,

Perhaps a distich might not strain his wit;

If epigram offend, his harmless lines

Might in gold letters swing on ale-house signs.

Then Hobbinol might propagate his bays,

And Tuttle-fields record his simple lays;

Where rhymes like these might lure the nurses eyes,

While gaping infants squawl for farthing pies.

* Treat here, ye shepherds blythe, your damsels
sweet,

* For pies and cheefecakes are for damsels meet.

Then Maurus in his proper sphere might shine,

And these proud numbers grace great William's sign.

* * This is the man, this the Naffovian, whom
 ' I nam'd the brave deliverer to come.
 But now the driving gales suspend the rain,
 We mount our steeds, and Devon's city gain.
 Hail, happy native land!——but I forbear,
 What other counties must with envy hear.

• *Prince Arthur, book 5.*

EPISTLE III.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM PULTENEY, Esq;

PUlt'ney, methinks you blame my breach of word;
What, cannot Paris one poor page afford?
Yes, I can sagely, when the times are past,
Laugh at those follies which I strove to taste,
And each amusement, which we shar'd, review,
Pleas'd with meer talking, since I talk to you.
But how shall I describe in humble prose,
Their balls, assemblies, operas and beaus?
In prose, you cry! oh no, the muse must aid,
And leave Parnassus for the Tuilleries shade;
Shall he (who late Britannia's city trod,
And led the draggled muse, with pattens shod,
Though dirty-lanes, and alleys doubtful ways)
Refuse to write, when Paris asks his lays!

Well then, I'll try. Descend, ye beauteous Nine,
In all the colours of the rainbow shine.
Let sparkling stars your neck and ear adorn,
Lay on the blushes of the crimson morn,
So may ye balls and gay assemblies grace,
And at the opera claim the foremost place.

Trav'lers should ever fit expression chuse,
Nor with low phrase the lofty theme abuse.
When they describe the state of eastern lords,
Pomp and magnificence should swell their words;

And when they paint the serpent's scaly pride,
 Their lines should hiss, their numbers smoothly slide :
 But they, unmindful of poetic rules,
 Describe alike Mockaws, and Great-Moguls.
 Dampier would thus, without ill-meaning satire,
 Dress forth in simple style the Petit-maitre.

' In Paris, there's a race of animals,
 * (I've seen them at their operas and balls,)
 * They stand erect, they dance when-e'er they walk,
 * Monkeys in action, perroquets in talk ;
 * They're crown'd with feathers like the cockatoo,
 * And, like camelions, daily change their hue ;
 * From patches justly plac'd they borrow graces,
 * And with vermilion lacker o'er their faces,
 * This custom, as we visibly discern,
 * They, by frequenting ladies toilettes, learn.
 Thus might the trav'ler easy truth impart.
 Into the subject let me nobly start !

How happy lives the man, how sure to charm,
 Whose knot embroider'd flutters down his arm ?
 On him the ladies cast the yielding glance,
 Sigh in his songs, and languish in his dance ;
 While wretched is the wit, condemn'd, forlorn,
 Whose gummy hat no scarlet plumes adorn ;
 No broider'd flow'rs his worsted ankle grace,
 Nor cane emboss'd with gold directs his pace ;
 No lady's favour on his sword is hung.
 What, though Apollo dictate from his tongue,
 His wit is spiritless and void of grace,
 Who wants th' assurance of brocade and lace.
 While the gay fop genteely talks of weather,
 The fair in raptures doat upon his feather ;

Like a court lady though he write and spell,
 His minuet step was fashion'd by † Marcell;
 He dresses, fences. What avails to know?
 For women chuse their men, like silks, for show.
 Is this the thing, you cry, that Paris boasts?
 Is this the thing renown'd among our toasts?
 For such a flutt'ring sight we need not roam;
 Our own assemblies shine with these at home.

Let us into the field of beauty start;
 Beauty's a theme that ever warm'd the heart.
 Think not, ye fair, that I the sex accuse:
 How shall I spare you, prompted by the muse?
 (The muses all are prudes) she rails, she frets,
 Amidst this sprightly nation of coquettes;
 Yet let not us their loose coquett'ry blame;
 Women of ev'ry nation are the same.

You ask me, if Parisian dames, like ours,
 With rattling dice prophane the Sunday's hours;
 If they the gamester's pale-ey'd vigils keep,
 And stake their honour while their husbands sleep.
 Yes, Sir, like English toasts, the dames of France
 Will risque their income on a single chance.
 Nannette last night at tricking Pharaon play'd,
 The cards the Taillier's sliding hand obey'd;
 To-day her neck no brilliant circle wears,
 Nor the ray-darting pendant loads her ears.
 Why does old Chloris an assembly hold?
 Chloris each night divides the sharper's gold.
 Corinna's cheek with frequent losses burns,
 And no bold *trente le va* her fortune turns.

† A famous dancing-master.

Ah too rash virgin ! where's thy virtue flown ?
She pawns her person for the sharper's loan.
Yet who with justice can the fair upbraid,
Whose debts of honour are so duly paid ?

But let me not forget the toilette's cares,
Where art each morn the languid cheek repairs :
This red's too pale, nor gives a distant grace ;
Madame to-day puts on her opera face ;
From this we scarce extract the milk-maid's bloom,
Bring the deep dye that warms across the room :
Now flames her cheek, so strong her charms prevail,
That on her gown the filken rose looks pale !
Not but that France some native beauty boasts,
Clermont and Charolois might grace our toasts.

When the sweet-breathing spring unfolds the buds,
Love flies the dusty town for shady woods.
Then Tottenham fields with roving beauty swarm,
And Hampstead balls the city virgin warm,
Then Chelsea's meads o'erhear perfidious vows,
And the prest grass defrauds the grazing cows.
'Tis here the same ; but in a higher sphere,
For even court ladies sin in open air.
What cit with a gallant will trust his spouse
Beneath the tempting shade of Greenwich boughs ?
What peer of France would let his dutchess rove,
Where Boulogne's closest woods invite to love ?
But here no wife can blast her husband's fame,
Cuckold is grown an honourable name.
Stretch'd on the grass the shepherd sighs his pain,
And on the grass what shepherd sighs in vain ?
On Chloe's lap here Damon lay'd along,
Melts with the languish of her am'rous song;

There Iris flies Palaemon through the glade,
 Nor trips by chance——'till in the thickest shade;
 Here Celimene defends her lips and breast,
 For kisses are by struggling closer prest;
 Alexis there with eager flame grows bold,
 Nor can the nymph his wanton fingers hold;
 Be wise, Alexis; what so near the road!
 Hark, a coach rolls, and husbands are abroad!
 Such were our pleasures in the days of yore,
 When am'rous Charles Britannia's scepter bore;
 The nightly scene of joy the Park was made,
 And love in couples peopled ev'ry shade.
 But since at court the rural taste is lost,
 What mighty fums have velvet couches cost!

Sometimes the Tuilleries's gaudy walk I love,
 Where I through crouds of rustling manteaus rove;
 As here from side to side my eyes I cast,
 And gaz'd on all the glitt'ring train that past,
 Sudden a fop steps forth before the rest;
 I knew the bold embroidery of his vest.

He thus accosts me with familiar air,

‘ Parbleu ! en a fait cet habit en Angleterre !

‘ Quelle manche ! ce galon est grossièrement rangé,

‘ Voila quelque chose de fort beau et degagé !

This said : on his red heel he turns, and then

Hums a soft minuet, and proceeds agan.

‘ Well ; now you've Paris seen, you'll frankly own

‘ Your boasted London seems a country town ;

‘ Has Christianity yet reach'd your nation ?

‘ Are churches built ? are masquerades in fashion ?

‘ Do daily soups your dinners introduce ?

‘ Are music, snuff, and coaches yet in use ?

Pardon me, Sir; we know the Paris mode,
And gather politesse from courts abroad.
Like you, our courtiers keep a num'rous train
To load their coach, and tradesmen dun in vain.
Nor has religion left us in the lurch,
And, as in France, our vulgar croud the church;
Our ladies too support the masquerade,
The sex by nature love th' intriguing trade.
Straight the vain fop in ign'rant rapture cries,
' Paris the barb'rous world will civilize !
Pray, Sir, point out among the passing band
The present beauties who the town command.
' See yonder dame; strict virtue chills her breast,
' Mark in her eye demure the prude protest;
' That frozen bosom native fire must want,
' Which boasts of constancy to one gallant !
' This next the spoils of fifty lovers wears,
' Rich Dandin's brilliant favours grace her ears;
' The necklace Florio's gen'rous flame bestow'd,
' Clitander's sparkling gems her finger load;
' But now, her charms grown cheap by constant use,
' She sins for scarfs, clock'd stockings, knots, and shoes.
' This next, with sober gait and serious leer,
' Wearies her knees with morn and ev'ning prayer;
' She scorns th' ignoble love of feeble pages,
' But with three abbots in one night engages.
' This with the cardinal her nights employs,
' Where holy sinews consecrate her joys.
' Why have I promis'd things beyond my power !
' Five assignations wait me at this hour,
' The sprightly countess first my visit claims,
' To-morrow shall indulge inferior dames.

' Pardon me, Sir ; that thus I take my leave,
' Gay Florimella flily twitch'd my sleeve.

Adieu, Monsieur—the opera hour draws near.
Not see the opera ! all the world is there ;
Where on the stage th' embroider'd youth of France
In bright array attract the female glance :
This languishes, this struts to show his mien,
And not a gold-clock'd stocking moves unseen.

But hark ! the full orchestra strike the strings ;
The hero struts, and the whole audience sings.

My jarring ear harsh grating murmurs wound,
Hoarse and confus'd, like Babel's mingled sound.
Hard chance had plac'd me near a noisy throat,
That in rough quavers bellow'd ev'ry note.
Pray Sir, says I, suspend a-while your song,
The opera's drown'd ; your lungs are wond'rous strong ;
I wish to hear your Roland's ranting strain,
While he with rooted forests strows the plain.
Sudden he shrugs surprize, and answers quick,
' Monsieur apparemment n'aime pas la musique.
Then turning round, he join'd th' ungrateful noise ;
And the loud chorus thunder'd with his voice.

O sooth me with some soft Italian air,
Let harmony compose my tortur'd ear !
When Anastasia's voice commands the strain,
The melting warble thrills through ev'ry vein ;
Thought stands suspense, and silence pleas'd attends,
While in her notes the heavenly choir descends.

But you'll imagine I'm a Frenchman grown,
Pleas'd and content with nothing but my own,
So strongly with this prejudice possess'd,
He thinks French music and French painting best.

Mention the force of learn'd Corelli's notes,
 Some scraping fidler of their ball he quotes;
 Talk of the spirit Raphael's pencil gives,
 Yet warm with life whose speaking picture lives;
 Yes Sir, says he, in colour and design,
 Rigaut and Raphael are extremely fine!

'Tis true his country's love transports his breast
 With warmer zeal, than your old Greeks profess.
 Ulysses lov'd his Ithaca of yore,
 Yet that sage trav'ler left his native shore;
 What stronger virtue in the Frenchman shines!
 He to dear Paris all his life confines.
 I'm not so fond. There are, I must confess,
 Things which might make me love my country less.
 I should not think my Britain had such charms,
 If lost to learning, if enslav'd by arms;
 France has her Richlieus and her Colberts known,
 And then, I grant it, France in science shone;
 We too, I own, without such aids may chance
 In ignorance and pride to rival France.

But let me not forget Corneille, Racine,
 Boileau's strong sense and Moliere's hum'rous scene.
 Let Cambray's name be sung above the rest,
 Whose maxims, Pult'ney, warm thy patriot breast;
 In Mentor's precepts wisdom strong and clear
 Dictates sublime, and distant nations hear.
 Hear all ye princes, who the world controul,
 What cares, what terrors haunt the tyrant's soul;
 His constant train are anger, fear, distrust,
 To be a king, is to be good and just;
 His people he protects, their rights he saves,
 And scorns to rule a wretched race of slaves.]

Happy, thrice happy shall the mornarch reign,
Where guardian laws despotic power restrain !
There shall the plough-share break the stubborn land,
And bending harvests tire the peasant's hand :
There liberty her settled mansion boasts,
There commerce plenty brings from foreign coasts,
O Britain, guard thy laws, thy rights defend,
So shall these blessings to thy sons descend !

You'll think 'tis time some other theme to chuse,
And not with beaux and fops fatigue the muse !
Should I let satyr loose on English ground,
There fools of various character abound ;
But here my verse is to one race confin'd,
All Frenchmen are of Petit-maitre kind.

EPISTLE IV.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

PAUL METHUEN, Esq.

THAT, 'tis encouragement makes science spread,
Is rarely practis'd, though 'tis often said;
When learning droops and sickens in the land,
What patron's found to lend a saving hand?
True gen'rous spirits prosp'rous vice detest,
And love to cherish virtue when distressed;
But ere our mighty lords this scheme pursue,
Our mighty lords must think and act like you.

Why must we climb the Alpine mountain's sides
To find the seat where harmony resides?
Why touch we not so soft the silver lute,
The chearful haut-boy, and the mellow flute?
'Tis not the Italian clime improves the sound,
But there the patrons of her sons are found.

Why flourish'd verse in great Augustus' reign?
He and Maecenas lov'd the muse's strain.
But now that wight in poverty must mourn
Who was (O cruel stars!) a poet born.
Yet there are ways for authors to be great;
Write ranc'rous libels to reform the state:
Or if you choose more sure and ready ways,
Spatter a minister with fulsome praise:
Launch out with freedom, flatter him enough;
Fear not, all men are dedication proof.

Be bolder yet, you must go farther still,
Dip deep in gall thy mercenary quill.
He who his pen in party quarrels draws,
Lifts an hir'd bravo to support the cause;
He must indulge his patron's hate and spleen,
And stab the fame of those he ne'er has seen.
Why then should authors mourn their desp'rate case?
Be brave, do this, and then demand a place.
Why art thou poor? exert the gifts to rise,
And banish tim'rous virtue from thy eyes.

All this seems modern preface, where we're told
That wit is prais'd, but hungry lives and cold:
Against th' ungrateful age these authors roar,
And fancy learning starves because they're poor.
Yet why should learning hope success at court?
Why should our patriots virtue's cause support?
Why to true merit should they have regard?
They know that virtue is its own reward.
Yet let not me of grievances complain,
Who (though the meanest of the muses train)
Can boast subscriptions to my humble lays,
And mingle profit with my little praise.

Ask painting, why she loves Hesperian air.
Go view, she cries, my glorious labours there;
There in rich palaces I reign in state,
And on the temple's lofty domes create.
The nobles view my works with knowing eyes,
They love the science, and the painter prize.

Why didst thou, Kent, forgo thy native land,
To emulate in picture Raphael's hand?
Think'st thou for this to raise thy name at home?
Go back, adorn the palaces of Rome;

There on the walls let thy just labours shine,
 And Raphael live again in thy design.
 Yet stay a while; call all thy genius forth,
 For Burlington unbiass'd knows thy worth;
 His judgment in thy master-strokes can trace
 Titian's strong fire and Guido's softer grace;
 But, oh consider, ere thy works appear,
 Canst thou unhurt the tongue of envy hear?
 Censure will blame, her breath was ever spent
 To blast the laurels of the eminent.
 While Burlington's proportion'd columns rise,
 Does not he stand the gaze of envious eyes?
 Doors, windows are condemn'd by passing fools,
 Who know not that they damn Palladio's rules.
 If Chandois with a lib'ral hand bestow,
 Censure imputes it all to pomp and show;
 When, if the motive right were understood,
 His daily pleasure is in doing good.

Had Pope with groveling numbers fill'd his page,
 Dennis had never kindled into rage.
 'Tis the sublime that hurts the critics ease;
 Write nonsense and he reads and sleeps in peace.
 Were Prior, Congreve, Swift and Pope unknown,
 Poor slander-selling Curl would be undone.
 He who would free from malice pass his days,
 Must live obscure, and never merit praise.
 But let this tale to valiant virtue tell
 The daily perils of deserving well.

A crow was strutting o'er the stubbled plain,
 Just as a lark descending clos'd his strain.
 The crow bespoke him thus with solemn grace,
 Thou most accomplish'd of the feather'd race,

What force of lungs ! how clear ! how sweet you sing!
And no bird soars upon a stronger wing.
The lark, who scorn'd soft flatt'ry, thus replies,
True, I sing sweet, and on strong pinion rise ;
Yet let me pass my life from envy free,
For what advantage are these gifts to me ?
My song confines me to the wiry cage,
My flight provokes the falcon's fatal rage.
But as you pass I hear the fowlers say,
To shoot at crows is powder flung away.

What force of language! how clear! how bright
 And so full of sense upon a brighter wing.
 The link, who's heart's a link, that's right,
 True, I beg leave, and on my knees I lie;
 For as he's making his from every face,
 For what advantage he's right to me;
 My long confinement to the way, I beg,
 My right to be as I am, I beg;
 But as you call I beg the favour, I beg;
 To think as now is power, I beg.

THE END

TALES.

T A L E S

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T A L E S.

An Answer to the SOMPNER's Prologue of CHAUCER.

IN IMITATION OF CHAUCER'S STYLE.

THE Sompner leudly hath his prologue told,
And faine on the freers his tale japing and bold;
How that in hell they searchen near and wide,
And ne one freer in all thilke place espyde,
But lo! the devil turn'd his erse about,
And twenty thousand freers wend in and out.
By which in Jeoffrys rhyming it appears,
The devil's belly is the hive of freers.

Now listneth lordings! forthwith ye shall hear,
What happened at a house in Lancashire.
A misere that had londs and tenement,
Who raketh from his villaines taxes and rent,
Owned a house which emptye long y-stood,
Full deeply sitid in a derkning wood,
Murmring a shallow brook runneth along,
Mong the round stones it maken doleful song.

Now there spreaden a rumour that everich night
The rooms ihaunted been by many a sprite,
The miller avoucheth, and all thereabout,
That they full oft' hearen the hellish rout;
Some faine they hear the jingling of chains,
And some hath heard the psautries straines,
At midnight some the heedless horse imeet,
And some espien a corse in a white sheet,

And oóther things, faye, elfin and elfe,
And shapés that fear createn to it selfe.

Now it so hapt, there was not ferre away,
Of grey freers a faire and rich abbaye,
Where liven a freer ycleped Pere Thomas,
Who daren alone in derke through church-yerds pass.

This freer would lye in thilke house all night,
In hope he might espyen a dreadful sprite.
He taketh candle, beades, and holy watere,
And legends eke of saintes, and bookes of prayere.
He entreth the room, and looketh round about,
And haspen the door to haspen the goblin out.
The candle hath he put close by the bed,
And in low tone his Ave Marye said.
With water now besprinkled hath the floore,
And maken cross on key-hole of the doore.
Ne was there not a mouse-hole in thilke place,
But he y-crossed hath by God his grace;
He crossed hath this, and eke he crossed that,
With Benedicite and God knows what.

Now he goeth to bed and lieth adown,
When the clock had just stricken the twelfth soun.
Bethinketh hem now what the cause had ibeen,
Why many sprites by mortals have been seen.
Hem remembreth how Dan Plutarch hath y-sed
That Caesar's sprite came to Brute his bed;
Of chains that frighten erst Artemidore,
The tales of Pline, Valere, and many more.
Hem thinketh that some murdere here been done,
And he mought see some bloodye ghost anone,
Or that some orphlines writings here be stor'd,
Or pot of gold laine deep beneath a board :

Or thinketh hem, if he mought see no sprite,
The abbay mought buy this houle cheap outright.

As hem thus thinketh, anone asleep he lies,
Up starten Sathanas with saucer eyes.

He turneth the freer upon his face downright,
Displaying his nether cheeks full broad and white.
Then quoth Dan Sathanas as he thwack'd him fore,
Thou didst forget to guard thy postern door.
There is an hole which hath not crossed been :
Farewel, from whence I came, I creepen in.

Now plain it is ytellen in my verse,
If devils in hell bear freers in their erse,
On earth the devil in freers doth y-dwell ;
Were there no freers, the devil mought keep in hell.

VOL. II.

C

WORK FOR A COOPER,

A T A L E.

A Man may lead a happy life,
Without that needful thing a wife :
This long have lusty abbots known,
Who ne'er knew spouses—of their own,
What though your house be clean and neat,
With couches, chairs, and beds compleat ;
Though you each day invite a friend,
Though he should every dish commend,
On Bagshot-heath your mutton fed,
Your fowls at Brandford born and bred ;
Though purest wine your cellars boast,
Wine worthy of the fairest toast ;
Yet there are other things requir'd :
Ring, and let's see the maid you hir'd—
Bless me ! those hands might hold a broom,
Twirl round a mop, and wash a room,
A batchelor his maid should keep,
Not for that servile use to sweep,
Let her his humour understand,
And turn to ev'ry thing her hand.
Get you a lass that's young and tight,
Whose arms are, like her apron, white ;
What though her shift be seldom seen ?
Let that, though coarse, be always clean ;
She might each morn your tea attend,
And on your wrist your ruffle mend ;

Then if you break a roguish jest,
Or squeeze her hand, or pat her breast,
She cries, oh dear Sir, don't be naught !
And blushes speak her last night's fault.
To her your household cares confide,
Let your key jingle at her side,
A footman's blunders tease and fret ye,
E'en while you chide you smile on Betty.
Discharge him then, if he's too spruce,
For Betty's for his master's use.

Will you your am'rous fancy balk,
For fear some prudish neighbour talk ?
But you'll object, that you're afraid
Of the pert freedoms of a maid ;
Besides your wiser heads will say,
That she who turns her hand this way,
From one vice to another drawn,
Will lodge your silver spoons in pawn.
Has not the homely wrinkled jade
More need to learn the pilf'ring trade ?
For love all Betty's wants supplies,
Laces her shoes, her manteau dyes,
All her stuff suits she flings away,
And wears thread sattin every day.

Who then a dirty drab would hire,
Brown as the hearth of kitchin fire ?
When all must own, were Betty put
To the black duties of the slut,
As well she scours or scrubs a floor,
And still is good for something more.

Thus to avoid the greater vice,
I knew a priest, of conscience nice,

To quell his lust for neighbour's spouse,
Keep fornication in his house:

But you're impatient all this time,
Fret at my counsel, curse my rhyme,
Be satisfy'd. I'll talk no more,
For thus my tale begins——Of yore
There dwelt at Blois a priest full fair,
With rolling eye and crisped hair,
His chin hung low, his brow was sleek,
Plenty lay basking on his cheek,
Whole days at cloyster-grates he sat,
Ogled, and talk'd of this and that
So feelingly; the nuns lamented
That double bars were e'er invented.
If he the wanton wife confest
With downcast eye, and heaving breast;
He strok'd her cheek to still her fear,
And talk'd of sins *en Cavalier*.
Each time enjoin'd her penance mild,
And fondled on her like his child.
At ev'ry jovial gossip's feast
Pere Bernard was a welcome guest,
Mirth suffer'd not the least restraint,
He could at will shake off the saint:
Nor frown'd he when they freely spoke,
But shook his sides, and took the joke;
Nor fail'd he to promote the jest,
And shar'd the sins which they confest.

Yet that he might not always roam,
He kept conveniencies at home.
His maid was in the bloom of beauty,
Well limb'd for ev'ry social duty;

He meddled with no household cares,
 To her consign'd his whole affairs ;
 She of his study kept the keys,
 For he was studious——of his ease :
 She had the power of all his locks,
 Could rummage ev'ry chest and box,
 Her honesty such credit gain'd,
 Not e'en the cellar was restrain'd.

In troth it was a goodly show,
 Lin'd with full hogheads all a-row ;
 One vessel, from the rank remov'd,
 Far dearer than the rest he lov'd.
 ' Pour la bonne bouche' 'twas set aside,
 To all but choicest friends deny'd.
 He now and then would send a quart,
 To warm some wife's retentive heart,
 Against confession's sullen hour :
 Wine has all secrets in its power.
 At common feasts it had been waste,
 Nor was it fit for layman's taste,
 If monk or friar were his guest,
 They drank it, for they know the best.
 Nay, he at length so fond was grown,
 He always drank it when——alone.

Who shall recount his civil labours,
 In pious visits to his neighbours ?
 Whene'er weak husbands went astray,
 He guess'd their wives were in the way,
 'Twas then his charity was shown,
 He chose to see them when alone.

Now was he bent on cuckoldom :
 He knew friend Dennis was from home ;

His wife (a poor neglected beauty,
 Defrauded of a husband's duty)
 Had often told him at confession,
 How hard she struggled 'gainst transgression.
 He now resolves, in heat of blood,
 To try how firm her virtue stood.
 He knew that wine (to love best aid)
 Has oft' made bold the shamefac'd maid,
 Taught her to romp, and take more freedoms,
 Than nymphs train'd up at Smith's or Needham's.

A mighty bottle straight he chose,
 Such as might give two friars their dose:
 Nannette he call'd : the cellar door
 She straight unlocks, descends before,
 He follow'd close. But when he spies
 His fav'rite cask ; with lifted eyes
 And lifted hands aloud he cries.
 Heigh day ! my darling wine astoop !
 It must, alas ! have sprung a hoop ;
 That there's a leak is past all doubt,
 (Reply'd the maid)——I'll find it out.
 She sets the candle down in haste,
 Tucks her white apron round her waste,
 The hog'shead's mouldy side ascends,
 She straddles wide, and downward bends ;
 So low she stoops to seek the flaw,
 Her coats rose high, her master saw——
 I see—he cries——(then claspt her fast)
 The leak through which my wine has past.
 Then all in haste the maid descended,
 And in a trice the leak was mended.

He found in Nannette all he wanted,
So Dennis' brows remain'd unplanted.

E'er since this time all lusty friars
(Warm'd with predominant desires,
Whene'er the flesh with spirit quarrels)
Look on the sex as leaky barrels.
Beware of these, ye jealous spouses,
From such like coopers guard your houses;
For if they find not work at home,
For jobs through all the town they roam.

THE
EQUIVOCATION.
A TALE.

AN abbot rich (whose taste was good,
Alike in science and in food)
His bishop had resolv'd to treat;
The bishop came, the bishop eat;
'Twas silence, till their stomachs fail'd;
And now at heretics they rail'd;
What heresy (the prelate said)
Is in that church where priests may wed!
Do not we take the church for life?
But those divorce her for a wife,
Like laymen keep her in their houses,
And own the children of their spouses,
Vile practices! the abbot cry'd,
For pious use we're set aside!
Shall we take wives? marriage at best
Is but carnality profess.
Now as the bishop took his glass,
He spy'd our abbot's buxom lass
Who cross'd the room, he mark'd her eye,
That glow'd with love; his pulse beat high.
Fye, father, fye (the prelate cries)
A maid so young! for shame, be wise.
These indiscretions lend a handle
To lewd lay tongues, to give us scandal;

For your vows sake, this rule I give t'ye,
Let all your maids be turn'd of fifty.

The priest reply'd, I have not swerv'd,
But your chaste precept well observ'd;
That last full twenty-five has told,
I've yet another who's as old;
Into one sum their ages cast;
So both my maids are fifty past.

The prelate smil'd, but durst not blame;
For why? his lordship did the same.

Let those who reprimand their brothers,
First mend the faults they find in others.

8

A TRUE
S T O R Y
OF AN
A P P A R I T I O N.

Sceptics (whose strength of argument makes out
That wisdom's deep inquiries end in doubt)
Hold this assertion positive and clear,
That sprites are pure delusions rais'd by fear.
Not that fam'd ghost, which in presaging found
Call'd Brutus to Philippi's fatal ground;
Nor can Tiberius Gracchus' goary shade
These ever-doubting disputants persuade.
Straight they with smiles reply; those tales of old
By visionary priests were made and told:
Oh might some ghost at dead of night appear,
And make you own conviction by your fear!
I know your sneers my easy faith accuse,
Which with such idle legends scars the muse:
But think not that I tell those vulgar sprites,
Which frightened boys relate on winter nights;
How cleanly milk-maids meet the fairy train,
How headless horses drag the clinking chain,
Night-roaming ghosts, by saucer eye-balls known,
The common spectres of each country town.
No, I such fables can like you despise,
And laugh to hear these nurse-invented lies.
Yet has not oft the fraudulent guardians' fright
Compell'd him to restore an orphan's right?

And can we doubt that horrid ghosts ascend,
Which on the conscious murd'ers steps attend ?
Hear then, and let attested truth prevail,
From faithful lips I learnt the dreadful tale.

Where Arden's forest spreads its limits wide,
Whose branching paths the doubtful road divide,
A trav'ler took his solitary way ;
When low beneath the hills was sunk the day.
And now the skies with gath'ring darkness lour,
The branches rustle with the threaten'd show'r ;
With sudden blasts the forest murmurs loud,
Indented lightnings cleave the fable cloud,
Thunder on thunder breaks, the tempest roars,
And heav'n discharges all its watry stores.
The wand'ring trav'ler shelter seeks in vain,
And shrinks and shivers with the beating rain ;
On his steed's neck the slacken'd bridle lay,
Who chose with cautious step th' uncertain way ;
And now he checks the rein, and halts to hear
If any noise foretold a village near.
At length from far a stream of light he sees
Extend its level ray between the trees ;
Thither he speeds, and as he nearer came
Joyful he knew the lamp's domestic flame
That trembled through the window ; cross the way
Darts forth the barking cur, and stands at bay.

It was an ancient lonely house, that stood
Upon the borders of the spacious wood ;
Here towers and antique battlements arise,
And there in heaps the moulder'd ruin lies ;
Some lord this mansion held in days of yore,
To chase the wolf, and pierce the foaming boar :

How chang'd, alas, from what it once had been !
'Tis now degraded to a public inn.

Straight he dismounts, repeats his loud commands ;
Swift at the gate the ready landlord stands ;
With frequent cringe he bows, and begs excuse,
His house was full, and ev'ry bed in use.
What not a garret, and no straw to spare ?
Why then the kitchen-fire and elbow-chair
Shall serve for once to nod away the night.
The kitchen ever is the servant's right,
Replies the host ; there, all the fire around,
The count's tir'd footmen snore upon the ground.

The maid, who listen'd to this whole debate,
With pity learnt the weary stranger's fate.
Be brave, she cries, you still may be our guest,
Our haunted room was ever held the best ;
If then your valour can the fright sustain
Of rattling curtains and the clinking chain,
If your courageous tongue have power to talk,
When round your bed the horrid ghost shall walk ;
If you dare ask it, why it leaves its tomb,
I'll see your sheets well air'd, and show the room.
Soon as the frighted maid her tale had told,
The stranger enter'd, for his heart was bold.

The damsel led him through a spacious hall,
Where ivy hung the half-demolish'd wall ;
She frequent look'd behind, and chang'd her hue,
While fancy tip'd the candle's flame with blue.
And now they gain'd the winding stairs ascent,
And to the lonesome room of terrors went.
When all was ready swift retir'd the maid,
The watch-lights burn, tuckt warm in bed was laid.

The hardy stranger, and attends the sprite
Till his accusom'd walk at dead of night.

At first he hears the wind with hollow roar
Shake the loose lock, and swing the creaking door;
Nearer and nearer draws the dreadful sound
Of rattling chains, that dragg'd upon the ground:
When lo, the spectre came with horrid stride,
Approach'd the bed, and drew the curtains wide!
In human form the ghastful phantom stood,
Expos'd his mangled bosom dy'd with blood,
Then silent pointing to his wounded breast,
Thrice wav'd his hand. Beneath the frighted guest
The bed-cords trembled, and with shudd'ring fear,
Sweat chill'd his limbs, high rose his bristled hair;
Then mutt'ring hasty pray'rs, he mann'd his heart,
And cry'd aloud; say, whence and who thou art.
The stalking ghost with hollow voice replys,
Three years are counted, since with mortal eyes
I saw the sun, and vital air respir'd.
Like thee benighted, and with travel tir'd,
Within these walls I slept. O thirst of gain!
See, still the planks the bloody mark retain;
Stretch'd on this very bed, from sleep I start,
And see the steel impending o'er my heart;
The barb'rous hostess held the lifted knife,
The floor ran purple with my gushing life.
My treasure now they seize, the golden spoil
They bury deep beneath the grass-grown soil,
Far in the common-field. Be bold, arise,
My steps shall lead thee to the secret prize;
There dig and find; let that thy care reward:
Call loud on justice, bid her not retard

To punish murder; lay my ghost at rest,
So shall with peace secure thy nights be blest;
And when beneath these boards my bones are found,
Decent interr them in some sacred ground. [bed,

Here ceas'd the ghost. The stranger springs from
And boldly follows where the phantom led;
The half-worn stony stairs they now descend,
Where passages obscure their arches bend
Silent they walk; and now through groves they pass,
Now through wet meads their steps imprint the grass;
At length amidst a spacious field they came:
There stops the spectre, and ascends in flame.
Amaz'd he stood, no bush, nor briar was found,
To teach his morning search to find the ground;
What could he do? the night was hideous dark,
Fear shook his joints, and nature dropt the mark;
With that he starting wak'd, and rais'd his head,
But found the golden mark was left in bed.
What is the statesman's vast ambitious scheme,
But a short vision, and a golden dream?
Power, wealth, and title elevate his hope;
He wakes. But for a garter finds a rope.

THE
M A D - D O G,
A T A L E.

A Prude, at morn and ev'ning prayer,
Had worn her velvet cushion bare;
Upward she taught her eyes to roll,
As if she watch'd her soaring soul;
And when devotion warm'd the croud,
None sung, or smote her breast so loud:
Pale penitence had mark'd her face
With all the meagre signs of grace.
Her mass-book was compleatly lin'd
With painted saints of various kind:
But when in ev'ry page she view'd
Fine ladies who the flesh subdu'd;
As quick her beads she counted o'er,
She cry'd—such wonders are no more!
She chose not to delay confession,
To bear at once a year's transgression,
But ev'ry week set all things even,
And balanc'd her accounts with heav'n.
Behold her now in humble guise,
Upon her knees with downcast eyes
Before the priest: she thus begins,
And sobbing, blubbers forth her sins.

Who could that tempting man resist ?
 My virtue languish'd, as he kiss'd ;
 I strove, —— 'till I could strive no longer ?
 How can the weak subdue the stronger ?

The father ask'd her where and when ?
 How many ? and what sort of men ?
 By what degrees her blood was heated ?
 How oft the frailty was repeated ?
 Thus have I seen a pregnant wench
 All flush'd with guilt before the bench,
 The judges (wak'd by wanton thought)
 Dive to the bottom of her fault,
 They leer, they simper at her shame,
 And make her call all things by name.

And now to sentence he proceeds,
 Prescribes how oft to tell her beads ;
 Shows her what saints could do her good,
 Doubles her fast to cool her blood,
 Eas'd of her sins, and light as air,
 Away she trips ; perhaps to prayer.
 'Twas no such thing. Why then this haste ;
 The clock has struck, the hour is past,
 And on the spur of inclination,
 She scorn'd to bilk her assignation.

Whate'er she did, next week she came,
 And piously confess the same ;
 The priest, who female frailties pity'd,
 First chid her, then her sins remitted.

But did she now her crime bemoan
 In penitential sheets alone ?
 And was no bold, no beastly fellow
 The nightly partner of her pillow ?

Nó, none; for the next time in the grove
A bank was conscious of her love.

Confession-day was come about,
And now again it all must out.

She seems to wipe her twinkling eyes,
What now, my child, the father cries.
Again, says she!—with threatening looks,
He thus the prostrate dame rebukes.

Madam, I grant there's something in it,
That virtue has th' unguarded minute;
But pray now tell me what are whores,
But women of unguarded hours?
Then you must sure have lost all shame,
What ev'ry day, and still the same,
And no fault else! 'tis strange to find
A woman to one sin confin'd!

Pride is this day her darling passion,
The next day slander is in fashion;
Gaming succeeds; if fortune crosses,
Then virtue's mortgag'd for her losses;
By use her fav'rite vice she loaths,
And loves new follies like new cloaths;
But you, beyond all thought, unchaste,
Have all sin center'd near your waste!

Whence is this appetite so strong?

Say, Madam, did your mother long?

Or is it lux'ry and high diet

That won't let virtue sleep in quiet?

She tells him now with meekest voice,

That she had never err'd by choice,

Nor was there known a virgin chaster,

Till ruin'd by a sad disaster.

That she a fav'rite lap-dog had,
Which, (as she stroak'd and kiss'd) grew mad;
And on her lip a wound indenting,
First set her youthful blood fermenting.

The priest reply'd with zealous fury,
You should have sought the means to cure ye.
Doctors by various ways we find,
Treat these distempers of the mind.

Let gaudy ribbands be deny'd
To her, who raves with scornful pride;
And if religion crack her notions,
Lock up her volumes of devotions;
But if for man her rage prevail,
Bar her the sight of creatures male.
Or else to cure such venom'd bites,
And set the shatter'd thoughts arights;
They send you to the ocean's shore,
And plunge the patient o'er and o'er.

The dame reply'd; alas! in vain
My kindred forc'd me to the main;
Naked and in the face of day:
Look not, ye fishermen, this way!
What virgin had not done as I did?
My modest hand, by nature guided,
Debarr'd at once from human eyes
The seat where female honour lies,
And though thrice dipt from top to toe,
I still secur'd the post below,
And guarded it with grasp so fast,
Not one drop through my fingers past;
Thus owe I to my bashful care
That all the rage is settled there.

Weigh well the projects of mankind;
Then tell me, reader, canst thou find
The man from madness wholly free?
They all are mad——save you and me.
Do not the statesmen, fop and wit
By daily follies prove they're bit.
And when the briny cure they try'd,
Some part still kept above the tide!

Some men (when drench'd beneath the wave)
High o'er their heads their fingers save:
Those hands by mean extortion thrive,
Or in the pocket lightly dive;
Or more expert in pilf'ring vice,
They burn and itch to cog the dice.

Plunge in a courtier; straight his fears
Direct his hands to stop his ears.
And now truth seems a grating noise,
He loves the slanderer's whisp'ring voice;
He hangs on flattery with delight,
And thinks all fulsome praise is right.

All women dread a wat'ry death:
They shut their lips to hold their breath,
And though you duck them ne'er so long,
Not one salt drop e'er wets their tongue;
'Tis hence they scandal have at will,
And that this member ne'er lies still.

BIRTH OF THE SQUIRE.

ECLOGUES.

ECLOGUES.

D 3

RECEIVED

T H E
BIRTH OF THE SQUIRE,
AN ECLOGUE.

IN IMITATION OF THE POLLIO
OF VIRGIL.

YE sylvan muses, loftier strains recite,
Not all in shades, and humble cotts delight.
Hark! the bells ring; along the distant grounds
The driving gales convey the swelling sounds;
Th' attentive swain, forgetful of his work,
With gaping wonder, leans upon his fork.
What sudden news alarms the waking morn?
To the glad squire a hopeful heir is born.
Mourn, mourn, ye stags, and all the beasts of chase,
This hour destruction brings on all your race:
See the pleas'd tenants duteous off'rings bear,
Turkeys and geese, and grocer's sweetest ware;
With the new health the pond'rous tankard flows,
And old Otober reddens ev'ry nose.
Beagles and spaniels round his cradle stand,
Kiss his moist lip and gently lick his hand;
He joys to hear the shrill horn's echoing sounds,
And learns to lisp the names of all the hounds.
With frothy ale to make his cup o'erflow,
Barley shall in paternal acres grow;

When rip'ning youth with down o'er shades his chin,
And ev'ry female eye incites to sin;
The milk-maid (thoughtless of her future shame)
With smacking lip shall raise his guilty flame;
The dairy, barn, the hay-loft and the grove
Shall oft' be conscious of their stolen love.
But think, Priscilla, on that dreadful time,
When pangs and watry qualms shall own thy crime;
How wilt thou tremble when thy nipple's prest,
To see the white drops bathe thy swelling breast!
Nine moons shall publickly divulge thy shame,
And the young squire forestall a father's name.

When twice twelve times the reaper's sweeping hand
With levell'd harvests has bestrown the land,
On fam'd St. Hubert's feast his winding horn
Shall cheer the joyful hound and wake the morn!
This memorable day his eager speed
Shall urge with bloody heel the rising steed.
O check the foamy bit, nor tempt thy fate,
Think on the murders of a five-bar gate!
Yet prodigal of life, the leap he tries,
Low in the dust his groveling honour lies,
Headlong he falls, and on the rugged stone
Distorts his neck, and cracks the collar-bone;
O vent'rous youth, thy thirst of game allay,
Mayst thou survive the perils of this day!
He shall survive; and in late years be sent
To snore away debates in parliament.

The time shall come, when his more solid sense
With nod important shall the laws dispense;
A justice with grave justices shall sit,
He praise their wisdom, they admire his wit.

No greyhound shall attend the tenent's pace,
No rusty gun the farmer's chimney grace;
Salmons shall leave their coverts void of fear,
Nor dread the thievish net or triple spear;
Poachers shall tremble at his awful name,
Whom vengeance now o'ertakes for murder'd game.

Assist me, Bacchus, and ye drunken pow'rs,
To sing his friendships and his midnight hours!

Why dost thou glory in thy strength of beer,
Firm-cork'd, and mellow'd till the twentieth year;
Brew'd or when Phoebus warms the fleecy sign,
Or when his languid rays in Scorpio shine.
Think on the mischiefs which from hence have sprung!
It arms with curses dire the wrathful tongue;
Foul scandal to the lying lip affords,
And prompts the mem'ry with injurious words.
O where is wisdom, when by this o'erpower'd?
The state is censur'd, and the maid deflower'd!
And wilt thou still, O Squire, brew ale so strong?
Hear then the dictates of prophetic song.

Methinks I see him in his hall appear,
Where the long table floats in clammy beer,
'Midst mugs and glasses shatter'd o'er the floor,
Dead-drunk his servile crew supinely snore;
Triumphant, o'er the prostrate brutes he stands,
The mighty bumper trembles in his hands;
Boldly he drinks, and like his glorious fires,
In copious gulps of potent ale expires.

THE
TOILETTE,
A TOWN ECLOGUE.

L Y D I A.

NOW twenty springs had cloath'd the Park with
green,
Since Lydia knew the blossom of fifteen;
No lovers now her morning hours molest,
And catch her at her toilette half undrest;
The thund'ring knocker wakes the street no more,
No chairs, no coaches croud her silent door;
Her midnights once at cards and hazard fled,
Which now, alas! she dreams away in bed.
Around her wait shocks, monkeys and mockaws,
To fill the place of fops, and perjur'd beaus;
In these she views the mimickry of man,
And smiles when grinning Pug gallants her fan;
When Poll repeats, the sounds deceive her ear,
For sounds, like his, once told her Damon's care.
With these alone her tedious mornings pass;
Or at the dumb devotion of her glass,
She smooths her brow, and frizles forth her hairs,
And fancies youthful dress gives youthful airs;
With crimson wool she fixes every grace,
That not a blush can discompose her face.

Reclin'd upon her arm she pensive fate,
And curs'd th' inconstancy of youth too late.

O youth! O spring of life! for ever lost!
No more my name shall reign the fav'rite toast,
On glass no more the di'mond grave my name,
And rhymes misspell'd record a lover's flame:
Nor shall side-boxes watch my restless eyes,
And as they catch the glance in rows arise
With humble bows; nor white-glov'd beaux encroach
In crouds behind, to guard me to my coach.
Ah hapless nymph! such conquests are no more,
Eor Chloe's now what Lydia was before!
'Tis true, this Chloe boasts the peach's bloom,
But does her nearer whisper breathe perfume?
I own her taper shape is form'd to please;
Yet if you saw her unconfin'd by stays!
She doubly to fifteen may make pretence,
Alike we read it in her face and sense:
Her reputation! but that never yet
Could check the freedoms of a young coquet.
Why will ye, then, vain fops, her eyes believe?
Her eyes can, like your perjur'd tongues, deceive.

What shall I do? how spend the hateful day?
At chapel shall I wear the morn away?
Who there frequents at these unmodish hours,
But ancient matrons with their frizled tow'rs,
And gay religious maids? my presence there
Amid that sober train would own despair;
Nor am I yet so old; nor is my glance
As yet fixt wholly to devotion's trance.

Straight then I'll dress, and take my wonted range
Through ev'ry Indian shop, through all the Change;

Where the tall jar erects his costly pride,
 With antic shapes in China's azure dy'd ;
 There careless lies the rich brocade unroll'd,
 Here shines a cabinet with burnish'd gold ;
 But then remembrance will my grief renew,
 'Twas there the raffling dice false Damon threw ;
 The raffling dice to him decide the prize.
 'Twas there he first convers'd with Chloe's eyes ;
 Hence sprung th' ill-fated cause of all my smart,
 To me the toy he gave, to her his heart.
 But soon thy perj'ry in the gift was found,
 The shiver'd China dropt upon the ground ;
 Sure omen that thy vows would faithless prove ;
 Frail was thy present, frailer is thy love.

O happy Poll, in wiry prison pent ;
 Thou ne'er hast known what love or rivals meant,
 And Pug with pleasure can his fetters bear,
 Who ne'er believ'd the vows that lovers swear !
 How am I curst ! (unhappy and forlorn)
 With perjury, with love, and rival's scorn !
 False are the loose coquet's inveigling airs,
 False is the pompous grief of youthful heirs,
 False is the cringing courtier's plighted word,
 False are the dice when gamesters stamp the board ;
 False is the sprightly widow's public tear ;
 Yet these to Damon's oaths are all sincere.

Fly from perfidious man, the sex disdain ;
 Let servile Chloe wear the nuptial chain.
 Damon is practis'd in the modish life,
 Can hate, and yet be civil to a wife.
 He games ; he swears ; he drinks ; he fights ; he roves ;
 Yet Chloe can believe he fondly loves.

Mistress and wife can well supply his need,
A miss for pleasure, and a wife for breed.
But Chloe's air is unconfin'd and gay,
And can perhaps an injur'd bed repay;
Perhaps her patient temper can behold
The rival of her love adorn'd with gold,
Powder'd with di'monds; free from thought and care,
A husband's sullen humours she can bear.

Why are these sobs? and why these streaming eyes?
Is love the cause? no, I the sex despise;
I hate, I loath his base perfidious name.
Yet if he should but feign a rival flame?
But Chloe boasts and triumphs in my pains,
To her he's faithful, 'tis to me he feigns.

Thus love-sick Lydia rav'd. Her maid appears;
A band-box in her steady hand she bears.
How well this ribband's gloss becomes your face,
She cries, in raptures! then, so sweet a lace!
How charmingly you look! so bright! so fair!
'Tis to your eyes the head-dress owes its air.
Straight Lydia smil'd; the comb adjusts her locks,
And at the play-house Harry keeps her box.

THE
TEA-TABLE.

A TOWN ECLOGUE.

DORIS AND MELANTHE.

Saint James's noon-day bell for pray'rs had toll'd,
And coaches to the patron's levée roll'd,
When Doris rose. And now through all the room
From flow'ry tea exhales a fragrant fume.
Cup after cup they sipt, and talk'd by fits,
For Doris here, and there Melanthe sits.
Doris was young, a laughter-loving dame,
Nice of her own alike and others fame;
Melanthe's tongue could well a tale advance,
And sooner gave than sunk a circumstance:
Lock'd in her mem'ry secrets never dy'd;
Doris begun, Melanthe thus reply'd.

DORIS.

Sylvia the vain fantastic fop admires,
The rake's loose gallantry her bosom fires;
Sylvia like that is vain, like this she roves,
In liking them she but herself approves.

MELANTHE.

Laura rails on at men, the sex reviles,
 Their vice condemns, or at their folly smiles.
 Why should her tongue in just resentment fail,
 Since men at her with equal freedom rail.

DORIS.

Last masquerade was Sylvia nymph-like seen,
 Her hand a crook sustain'd, her dress was green;
 An am'rous shepherd led her through the croud,
 The nymph was innocent, the shepherd vow'd;
 But nymphs their innocence with shepherds trust;
 So both withdrew, as nymph and shepherd must.

MELANTHE.

Name but the licence of the modern stage,
 Laura takes fire, and kindles into rage;
 The whining tragic love she scarce can bear,
 But nauseous comedy ne'er shock'd her ear;
 Yet in the gall'ry mobb'd, she sits secure,
 And laughs at jests that turn the box demure.

DORIS.

Trust not, ye ladies, to your beauty's pow'r,
 For beauty withers like a shrivell'd flow'r;
 Yet those fair flow'rs that Sylvia's temples bind,
 Fade not with sudden blights or winter's wind;
 Like those her face defies the rolling years,
 For art her roses and her charms repairs.

MELANTHE.

Laura despises ev'ry outward grace,
 The wanton sparkling eye, the blooming face;
 The beauties of the soul are all her pride,
 For other beauties nature has deny'd;

If affectation show a beauteous mind,
Lives there a man to Laura's merits blind?

DORIS.

Sylvia be sure defies the town's reproach,
Whose defhabille is soil'd in hackney coach;
What though the fash was clos'd, must we conclude,
That she was yielding, when her fop was rude?

MELANTHE.

Laura learnt caution at too dear a cost.
What fair could e'er retrieve her honour lost?
Secret she loves; and who the nymph can blame,
Who durst not own a footman's vulgar flame?

DORIS.

Though Laura's homely taste descend so low;
Her footman well may vye with Sylvia's beau.

MELANTHE.

Yet why should Laura think it a disgrace,
When proud Miranda's groom wears Flanders lace?

DORIS.

What, though for music Cynthio boasts an ear?
Robin perhaps can hum an opera air.
Cynthio can bow, takes snuff, and dances well,
Robin talks common sense, can write and spell;
Sylvia's vain fancy drefs and show admires,
But 'tis the man alone who Laura fires.

MELANTHE.

Plato's wife morals Laura's soul improve;
And this no doubt must be Platonic love!
Her soul to gen'rous acts was still inclin'd;
What shows more virtue than an humble mind?

DORIS.

What though young Sylvia love the Park's cool shade,
And wander in the dusk the secret glade?
Masqu'd and alone (by chance) she met her spark,
That innocence is weak which shuns the dark.

MELANTHE.

But Laura for her flame has no pretence;
Her footman is a footman too in sense.
All prudes I hate, and those are rightly curst
With scandal's double load who censure first.

DORIS.

And what if Cynthio Sylvia's garter ty'd!
Who such a foot and such a leg would hide;
When crook-kneed Phillis can expose to view
Her gold-clock'd stocking, and her tawdry shoe?

MELANTHE.

If pure devotion center in the face,
If cens'ring others show intrinsic grace,
If guilt to public freedoms be confin'd,
Prudes (all must own) are of the holy kind!

DORIS.

Sylvia disdains reserve, and flies constraint:
She neither is, nor would be thought a saint.

MELANTHE.

Love is a trivial passion, Laura cries,
May I be blest with friendship's stricter ties;
To such a breast all secrets we commend;
Sure the whole drawing-room is Laura's friend.

DORIS.

At marriage Sylvia rails; who men would trust?
Yet husbands jealousies are sometimes just.

Her favours Sylvia shares among mankind,
Such gen'rous love should never be confin'd,

As thus alternate chat employ'd their tongue,
With thund'ring raps the brazen knocker rung.
Laura with Sylvia came; the nymphs arise:
This unexpected visit, Doris cries,
Is doubly kind! Melanthe Laura led,
Since I was last so blest, my dear, she said,
Sure 'tis an age! they sate; the hour was set;
And all again that night at Ombre met.

THE
FUNERAL,
A TOWN ECLOGUE.

SABINA. LUCY.

TWICE had the moon perform'd her monthly race,
Since first the veil o'ercaft Sabina's face.
Then dy'd the tender partner of her bed.
And lives Sabina when Fidelio's dead?
Fidelio's dead, and yet Sabina lives.
But see the tribute of her tears she gives;
Their absent lord her rooms in fable mourn,
And all the day the glimmering tapers burn;
Stretch'd on the couch of state she pensive lies,
While oft the snowy cambrick wipes her eyes.
Now enter'd Lucy, trusty Lucy knew,
To roll a sleeve, or bear a Billet-doux;
Her ready tongue, in secret service try'd,
With equal fluency spoke truth or ly'd,
She well could flush, or humble a gallant,
And serve at once as maid and confidant;
A letter from her faithful stays she took:
Sabina snatch'd it with an angry look,
And thus in hasty words her grief confest,
While Lucy strove to sooth her troubled breast.

SABINA.

What, still Myrtillo's hand! his flame I scorn,
Give back his passion with the seal untorn.
To break our soft repose has man a right,
And are we doom'd to read whate'er they write?

Not all the sex my firm resolves shall move,
 My life's a life of sorrow, not of love.
 May Lydia's wrinkles all my forehead trace,
 And Celia's paleness sicken o'er my face,
 May fops of mine, as Flavia's, favours boast,
 And coquets triumph in my honour lost;
 May cards employ my nights, and never more
 May these curst eyes behold a matadore!
 Break China, perish Shock, die Perroquet!
 When I Fidelio's dearer love forget.
 Fidelio's judgment scorn'd the foppish train,
 His air was easy, and his dress was plain,
 His words sincere, respect his presence drew,
 And on his lips sweet conversation grew.
 Where's wit, where's beauty, where is virtue fled?
 Alas! they're now no more; Fidelio's dead!

LUCY.

Yet when he liv'd, he wanted ev'ry grace;
 That easy air was then an awkward pace:
 Have not your sighs in whispers often said,
 His dress was slovenly, his speech ill-bred?
 Have not I heard you, with a secret tear,
 Call that sweet converse sullen and severe?
 Think not I come to take Myrtillo's part,
 Let Chloe, Daphne, Doris share his heart.
 Let Chloe's love in ev'ry ear express
 His graceful person and genteel address.
 All well may judge, what shaft has Daphne hit,
 Who suffers silence to admire his wit.
 His equipage and liv'ries Doris move,
 But Chloe, Daphne, Doris fondly love.

Sooner shall cits in fashions guide the court;
 And beaus upon the busy Change resort;
 Sooner the nation shall from snuff be freed,
 And fops apartments smoke with India's weed,
 Sooner I'd with and sigh through nun'ry grates,
 Than recommend the flame Sabina hates.

SABINA.

Because some widows are in haste subdu'd;
 Shall ev'ry fop upon our tears intrude?
 Can I forget my lov'd Fidelio's tongue,
 Soft as the warbling of Italian song?
 Did not his rosy lips breath forth perfume,
 Fragrant as steams from tea's imperial bloom?

LUCY.

Yet once you thought that tongue a greater curse
 Than squawles of children for an absent nurse.
 Have you not fancy'd in his frequent kifs
 Th' ungrateful leavings of a filthy mis?

SABINA.

Love, I thy pow'r defy; no second flame,
 Shall ever raze my dear Fidelio's name.
 Fannia without a tear might lose her lord,
 Who ne'er enjoy'd his presence but at board.
 And why should sorrow sit on Lesbia's face?
 Are there such comforts in a sot's embrace?
 No friend, no lover is to Lesbia dead,
 For Lesbia long had known a sep'rate bed.
 Gush forth, ye tears; waste, waste, ye sighs, my breast;
 My days, my nights were by Fidelio blest?

LUCY.

You cannot sure forget how oft' you said
 His teasing fondness jealousy betray'd!

When at the play the neighb'ring box he took,
You thought you read suspicion in his look;
When cards and counters flew around the board;
Have you not wish'd the absence of your lord?
His company was then a poor pretence,
To check the freedoms of a wife's expence!

SABINA.

But why should I Myrtillo's passion blame,
Since love's a fierce involuntary flame?

LUCY.

Could he the fallies of his heart withstand,
Why should he not to Chloe give his hand?
For Chloe's handsom, yet he slights her flame;
Last night she fainted at Sabina's name.
Why, Daphne, dost thou blast Sabina's charms?
Sabina keeps no lover from thy arms.
At Crimp Myrtillo play'd, in kind regards
Doris dealt love; he only dealt the cards;
Doris was touch'd with spleen; her fan she rent,
Flew from the table, and to tears gave vent.
Why, Doris, dost thou curse Sabina's eyes?
To her Myrtillo is a vulgar prize.

SABINA.

Yet say, I lov'd; how loud would censure rail,
So soon to quit the duties of the veil!
No, sooner plays and op'ras I'll forswear,
And change these China jars for Tunbridge ware;
Or trust my mother as a confidant,
Or fix a friendship with my maiden aunt,
Than till—to morrow throw my weeds away.
Yet let me see him, if he comes to-day!

THE
E S P O U S A L,
A SOBER ECLOGUE,

BETWEEN TWO OF THE PEOPLE
CALLED QUAKERS.

CALEB. TABITHA.

Beneath the shadow of a beaver hat,
Meek Caleb at a silent meeting sat;
His eye-balls oft' forgot the holy trance,
While Tabitha demure, return'd the glance.
The meeting ended, Caleb silence broke,
And Tabitha her inward yearnings spoke.

CALEB.

Beloved, see how all things follow love,
Lamb fondleth lamb, and dove disports with dove;
Yet fondled lambs their innocence secure,
And none can call the turtle's bill impure;
O fairest of our sisters, let me be
The billing dove, and fondling lamb to thee.

TABITHA.

But, Caleb, know that birds of gentle mind
Elect a mate among the sober kind,
Not the mockaws, all deck'd in scarlet pride,
Entice their mild and modest hearts aside;

ECLOGUES.

73

But thou, vain man, beguil'd by Popish shows,
Doatest on ribbands, flounces, furbelows.
If thy false heart be fond of tawdry dyes,
Go, wed the painted arch in summer skies;
Such love will like the rainbow's hue decay,
Strong at the first, but passeth soon away.

CALEB.

Name not the frailties of my youthful days,
When vice misled me through the harlot's ways;
When I with wanton look thy sex beheld,
And nature with each wanton look rebell'd;
Then parti-colour'd pride my heart might move
With lace; the net to catch unhallow'd love.
All such-like love is fading as the flower,
Springs in a day, and withereth in an hour:
But now I feel the spousal love within,
And spousal love no sister holds a sin.

TABITHA.

I know thou longest for the flaunting maid,
Thy falsehood own, and say I am betray'd;
The tongue of man is blister'd o'er with lies,
But truth is ever read in woman's eyes;
O that my lip obey'd a tongue like thine!
Or that thine eye bewray'd a love like mine!

CALEB.

How bitter are thy words! forbear to tease,
I too might blame—but love delights to please.
Why should I tell thee, that when last the sun
Painted the downy peach of Newington,
Josiah led thee through the garden's walk,
And mingled melting kisses with his talk?

Ah jealousy ! turn, turn thine eyes aside,
 How can I see that watch adorn thy side ?
 For verily no gift the sisters take
 For lust of gain, but for the giver's sake.

TABITHA.

I own, Josiah gave the golden toy,
 Which did the righteous hand of Quare employ ;
 When Caleb hath assign'd some happy day,
 I look on this and chide the hours delay :
 And when Josiah would his love pursue,
 On this I look and shun his wanton view.
 Man but in vain with trinkets tries to move,
 The only present love demands is love.

CALEB.

Ah Tabitha, to hear these words of thine
 My pulse beats high, as if inflam'd with wine !
 When to the brethren first with fervent zeal
 Thy spirit mov'd thy yearnings to reveal,
 How did I joy thy trembling lip to see
 Red as the cherry from the Kentish tree ;
 When extasy had warm'd thy look so meek,
 Gardens of roses blushed on thy cheek.
 With what sweet transport didst thou roll thine eyes,
 How did thy words provoke the brethren's sighs !
 Words that with holy sighs might others move,
 But, Tabitha, my sighs were sighs of love.

TABITHA.

Is Tabitha beyond her wishes blest ?
 Does no proud worldly dame divide thy breast ?
 Then hear me, Caleb, witness what I speak,
 This solemn promise death alone can break ;

Sooner I would bedeck my brow with lace,
And with immodest fav'rites shade my face,
Sooner like Babylon's lewd whore be drest
In glaring di'monds and a scarlet vest,
Or make a curt'sy in cathedral pew,
Than prove inconstant, while my Caleb's true.

CALEB.

When I prove false, and Tabitha forsake,
Teachers shall dance a jig at country wake;
Brethren unbeaver'd then shall bow their head,
And with prophane mince-pies our babes be fed.

TABITHA.

If that Josiah were with passion fir'd,
Warm as the zeal of youth when first inspir'd;
In steady love though he might persevere,
Unchanging as the decent garb we wear,
And thou wert fickle as the wind that blows,
Light as the feather on the head of beaus;
Yet I for thee would all the sex resign,
Sisters, take all the rest—be Caleb mine.

CALEB.

Though I had all that sinful love affords,
And all the concubines of all the lords,
Whose couches creak with whoredom's sinful shame,
Whose velvet chairs are with adult'ry lame;
Ev'n in the harlot's hall, I would not sip
The dew of lewdness from her lying lip;
I'd shun her paths, upon thy mouth to dwell,
More sweet than powder which the merchants sell;
O solace me with kisses pure like thine!
Enjoy, ye lords, the wanton concubine,

The spring now calls us forth ; come, sister, come,
To see the primrose and the daisy bloom,
Let ceremony bind the worldly pair,
Sisters esteem the brethrens word sincere.

TABITHA.

Espousals are but forms. O lead me hence,
For secret love can never give offence.

Then hand in hand the loving mates withdraw.
‘ True love is nature unrestrain’d by law.
This tenet all the holy sect allows ;
So Tabitha took earnest of a spouse.

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TO MY INGENIOUS AND WORTHY FRIEND

W — L — Esq;

*Author of that celebrated treatise in folio, called the
LAND-TAX BILL.*

WHEN poets print their works, the scribbling
crew

Stick o'er the bard with bays, like Christmas pew:

Can meagre poetry such fame deserve?

Can poetry; that only writes to starve?

And shall no laurel deck that famous head,

In which the senate's annual law is bred?

That hoary head, which greater glory fires,

By nobler ways and means true fame acquires.

O had I Virgil's force to sing the man,

Whose learned lines can millions raise PER ANN.

Great L — his praise should swell the trump of fame,

And Rapes and Wapentakes resound his name.

If the blind poet gain'd a long renown

By singing ev'ry Grecian chief and town;

Sure L — his prose much greater fame requires,

Which sweetly counts five thousand knights and
squires,

Their seats, their cities, parishes, and shires.

Thy copious preamble so smoothly runs,

Taxes no more appear like legal duns,

Lords, knights, and squires th' assessors power obey,

We read with pleasure, though with pain we pay.

Ah why did C — thy works defame!

That author's long harangue betrays his name:

After his speeches can his pen succeed?

Though forc'd to hear, we're not oblig'd to read.

80 MISCELLANIES.

Under what science shall thy works be read ?
 All know thou wert not poet born and bred ;
 Or dost thou boast th' historian's lasting pen,
 Whose annals are the Acts of worthy men ?
 No. Satyr is thy talent ; and each lash
 Makes the rich miser tremble o'er his cash ;
 What on the drunkard can be more severe,
 Than direful taxes on his ale and beer ?

Ev'n Button's wits are nought compar'd to thee,
 Who ne'er were known or prais'd but o'er his tea,
 While thou through Britain's distant isle shall spread,
 In ev'ry Hundred and Division read.
 Critics in Classics oft' interpolate,
 But ev'ry word of thine is fixt as fate.
 Some works come forth at noon, but die at night
 In blazing fringes round a tallow light,
 Some may perhaps to a whole week extend,
 Like S—— (when unassisted by a friend)
 But thou shalt live a year in spite of fate ;
 And where's your author boasts a longer date ?
 Poets of old had such a wond'rous power,
 That with their verses they could raise a tower ;
 But in thy prose a greater force is found ;
 What poet ever rais'd ten thousand pound ?
 Cadmus, by sowing dragons teeth, we read,
 Rais'd a vast army from the pois'nous seed.
 Thy labours, L——, can greater wonders do,
 Thou raisest armies, and canst pay them too.
 Truce with thy dreaded pen ; thy annals cease ;
 Why need we armies when the land's in peace ?
 Soldiers are perfect devils in their way,
 When once they're rais'd, they're curst hard to lay.

P A N T H E A.

A N E L E G Y.

LONG had Panthea felt love's secret smart,
And hope and fear alternate rul'd her heart;
Consenting glances had her flame confest.
(In woman's eyes her very soul's exprest)
Perjur'd Alexis saw the blushing maid,
He saw, he swore, he conquer'd and betray'd:
Another love now calls him from her arms,
His fickle heart another beauty warms;
Those oaths oft' whisper'd in Panthea's ears,
He now again to Galatea swears.
Beneath a beech th' abandon'd virgin laid,
In grateful solitude enjoys the shade;
There with faint voice she breath'd these moving
 strains,

While sighing zephyrs shar'd her am'rous pains.

Pale settled sorrow hangs upon my brow,
Dead are my charms; Alexis breaks his vow!
Think, think, dear shepherd, on the days you knew,
When I was happy when my swain was true;
Think how thy looks and tongue are form'd to move,
And think yet more——that all my fault was love.
Ah, could you view me in this wretched state!
You might not love me, but you could not hate.
Could you behold me in this conscious shade,
Where first thy vows, where first my love was paid,

Worn out with watching, fullen with despair,
And see each eye swell with a gushing tear ?
Could you behold me on this mossy bed,
From my pale cheek the lively crimson fled,
Which in my softer hours you oft' have sworn,
With rosy beauty far out-blush'd the morn ;
Could you untouch'd this wretched object bear,
And would not lost Panthea claim a tear ?
You could not sure--tears from your eyes would steal,
And unawares thy tender soul reveal.
Ah no !—thy soul with cruelty is fraught,
No tenderness disturbs thy savage thought ;
Sooner shall tigers spare the trembling lambs,
And wolves with pity hear their bleating dams ;
Sooner shall vultures from their quarry fly,
Than false Alexis for Panthea sigh.

Thy bosom ne'er a tender thought confess,
Sure stubborn flint has arm'd thy cruel breast ;
But hardest flints are worn by frequent rains,
And the soft drops dissolve their solid veins ;
While thy relentless heart more hard appears,
And is not soften'd by a flood of tears.

Ah, what is love ! Panthea's joys are gone,
Her liberty, her peace, her reason flown !
And when I view me in the watry glass,
I find Panthea now, not what she was.
As northern winds the new-blown roses blast,
And on the ground their fading ruins cast ;
As sudden blights corrupt the ripen'd grain,
And of its verdure spoil the mournful plain ;
So hapless love on blooming features preys,
So hapless love destroys our peaceful days.

Come, gentle sleep, relieve these weary'd eyes,
All sorrow in thy soft embraces dies :
There, spite of all thy perjur'd vows, I find
Faithless Alexis languishingly kind ;
Sometimes he leads me by the mazy stream,
And pleasingly deludes me in my dream ;
Sometimes he guides me to the secret grove,
Where all our looks, and all our talk is love.
Oh, could I thus consume each tedious day,
And in sweet slumbers dream my life away ;
But sleep, which now no more relieves these eyes,
To my sad soul the dear deceit denies.

Why does the sun dart forth his chearful rays ?
Why do the woods resound with warbling lays ?
Why does the rose her grateful fragrance yield,
And yellow cowslips paint the smiling field ?
Why do the streams with murm'ring music flow,
And why do groves their friendly shade bestow ?
Let sable clouds the chearful sun deface,
Let mournful silence seize the feather'd race ;
No more, ye roses, grateful fragrance yield,
Droop, droop, ye cowslips, in the blasted field ;
No more, ye streams, with murm'ring music flow,
And let not groves a friendly shade bestow :
With sympathizing grief let nature mourn,
And never know the youthful spring's return ;
And shall I never more Alexis see ?
Then what is spring, or grove, or stream to me ?

Why sport the skipping lambs on yonder plain ?
Why do the birds their tuneful voices strain ?
Why frisk those heifers in the cooling grove ?
Their happier life is ignorant of love.

Oh ! lead me to some melancholy cave,
To lull my sorrows in a living grave,
From the dark rock where dashing waters fall,
And creeping ivy hangs the craggy wall,
Where I may waste in tears my hours away,
And never know the seasons or the day.
Die, die, Panthea—fly this hateful grove,
For what is life without the swain I love ?

A R A M I N T A.

AN ELEGY.

NOW Phoebus rose; and with his early beams
Wak'd slumb'ring Delia from her pleasing
dreams;
Her wishes by her fancy were supply'd,
And in her sleep the nuptial knot was ty'd.
With secret joy she saw the morning ray
Chequer the floor, and through the curtains play;
The happy morn that shall her blest compleat,
And all her rivals envious hopes defeat.
In haste she rose; forgetful of her pray'rs,
Flew to the glass, and practis'd o'er her airs:
Her new-set jewels round her robe are plac'd,
Some in a brilliant buckle bind her waist;
Some round her neck a circling light display,
Some in her hair diffuse a trembling ray;
The silver knot o'erlooks the Mechlen lace,
And adds becoming beauties to her face:
Brocaded flow'rs o'er the gay manteau shine,
And the rich stays her taper shape confine:
Thus all her dress exerts a graceful pride,
And sporting loves surround th' expecting bride,
For Daphnis now attends the blushing maid,
Before the priest their solemn vows are paid;
This day which ends at once all Delia's cares,
Shall swell a thousand eyes with secret tears.

Cease, Araminta, 'tis in vain to grieve,
Canst thou from Hymen's bonds the youth retrieve?
Disdain his perjuries, and no longer mourn:
Recall my love, and find a sure return.

But still the wretched maid no comfort knows,
And with resentment cherishes her woes;
Alone she pines, and in these mournful strains,
Of Daphnis' vows, and her own fate complains.

Was it for this I sparkled at the Play,
And loiter'd in the Ring whole hours away?
When if thy chariot in the circle shone,
Our mutual passion by our looks was known:
Through the gay croud my watchful glances flew,
Where-e'er I pass thy grateful eyes pursue.

' Ah faithless youth! too well you saw my pain;
' For eyes the language of the soul explain.

Think, Daphnis, think that scarce five days are fled,
Since (O false tongue!) those treach'rous things you
said;

How did you praise my shape and graceful air!
And woman thinks all compliments sincere.
Didst thou not then in rapture speak thy flame,
And in soft sighs breathe Araminta's name?
Didst thou not then with oaths thy passion prove,
And with an awful trembling, say—I love?

Ah faithless youth! too well you saw my pain;
For eyes the language of the soul explain.

How could'st thou thus, ungrateful youth, deceive?
How could I thus, unguarded maid, believe?

Sure thou canst well recal that fatal night,
 When subtle love first enter'd at my sight :
 When in the dance I was thy partner chose,
 Gods ! what a rapture in my bosom rose !
 My trembling hand my sudden joy confess'd,
 My glowing cheeks a wounded heart express'd ;
 My looks spoke love ; while you with answer'ing eyes,
 In killing glances made as kind replies,
 Think, Daphnis, think, what tender things you said,
 Think what confusion all my soul betray'd ;
 You call'd my graceful presence Cynthia's air,
 And when I sung, the Syrens charm'd your ear ;
 My flame blown up by flattery stronger grew,
 A gale of love in ev'ry whisper flew.

' Ah faithless youth ! too well you saw my pain ;
 ' For eyes the language of the soul explain.

Whene'er I dress'd, my maid, who knew my flame,
 Cherish'd my passion with thy lovely name ;
 Thy picture in her talk so lively grew,
 That thy dear image rose before my view ;
 She dwelt whole hours upon thy shape and mien,
 And wounded Delia's fame to sooth my spleen :
 When she beheld me at the name grow pale,
 Straight to thy charms she chang'd her artful tale ;
 And when thy matchless charms were quite run o'er,
 I bid her tell the pleasing tale once more.
 Oh, Daphnis ! from thy Araminta fled !
 Oh, to my love for ever, ever dead !
 Like death, his nuptials all my hope remove,
 And ever part me from the man I love.

' Ah faithless youth ! too well you saw my pain ;
' For eyes the language of the soul explain.

O might I by my cruel fate be thrown,
In some retreat far from this hateful town !
Vain dress and glaring equipage, adieu !
Let happier nymphs those empty shows pursue,
Me, let some melancholy shade surround,
Where not the print of human step is found.
In the gay dance my feet no more shall move,
But bear me faintly through the lonely grove ;
No more these hands shall o'er the spinnet bound,
And from the sleeping strings call forth the sound ;
Music adieu ! farewell Italian airs !
The croaking raven now shall sooth my cares .
On some old ruin lost in thought I rest,
And think how Araminta once was blest ;
There o'er and o'er thy letters I peruse,
And all my grief in one kind sentence lose,
Some tender line by chance my woe beguiles,
And on my cheek a short-liv'd pleasure smiles ;
Why is this dawn of joy ? flow tears again ;
Vain are these oaths, and all these vows are vain ;
Daphnis, alas ! the Gordian knot has ty'd,
No force nor cunning can the band divide.
' Ah faithless youth ! since eyes the soul explain,
' Why knew I not that artful tongue could feign ?

ELEGY ON A LAP-DOG.

SHOCK's fate I mourn ; poor Shock is now no more,
Ye muses mourn, ye chamber-maids deplore.

Unhappy Shock, yet more unhappy fair,
Doom'd to survive thy joy and only care !
Thy wretched fingers now no more shall deck,
And tye the fav'rite ribband round his neck ;
No more thy hand shall smoothe his glossy hair,
And comb the wavings of his pendent ear.
Yet cease thy flowing grief, forsaken maid ;
All mortal pleasures in a moment fade :
Our surest hope is in an hour destroy'd,
And love, best gift of heav'n, not long enjoy'd.

Methinks I see her frantic with despair,
Her streaming eyes, wrung hands, and flowing hair ;
Her Mechlen pinner rent the floor bestrow,
And her torn fan gives real signs of woe.
Hence superstition, that tormenting guest,
That haunts with fancy'd fears the coward breast ;
No dread events upon this fate attend,
Stream eyes no more, no more thy tresses rend.
Though certain omens oft' forewarn a state,
And dying lions show the monarch's fate ;
Why should such fears bid Celia's sorrow rise ?
For when a lap-dog falls no lover dies.

Cease, Celia, cease ; restrain thy flowing tears,
Some warmer passion will dispel thy cares.

In man you'll find a more substantial bliss,
More grateful toying, and a sweeter kiss.

He's dead, oh lay him gently in the ground!
And may his tomb be by this verse renown'd.

' Here Shock, the pride of all his kind is laid;
' Who fawn'd like man, but ne'er like man betray'd.

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TO A
YOUNG LADY,

With some LAMPREYS:

WITH lovers 'twas of old the fashion
By presents to convey their passion;
No matter what the gift they sent,
The lady saw that love was meant.
Fair Atalanta, as a favour,
Took the boar's head her hero gave her;
Nor could the bristly thing affront her,
'Twas a fit present from a hunter.
When squires send woodcocks to the dame,
It serves to show their absent flame:
Some by a snip of woven hair,
In posied lockets bribe the fair;
How many mercenary matches,
Have sprung from di'mond-rings and watches!
But hold——a ring, a watch, a locket,
Would drain at once a poet's pocket;
He should send songs that cost him nought,
Nor ev'n be prodigal of thought.

Why then send lampreys? fy, for shame!
'Twill set a virgin's blood on flame.
This to fifteen a proper gift!
It might lend sixty-five a lift!

I know your maiden aunt will scold,
And think my present somewhat bold,

I see her lift her hands and eyes,

‘ What eat it, niece ; eat Spanish flies !

‘ Lamprey’s a most immodest diet :

‘ You’ll neither wake nor sleep in quiet.

‘ Should I to-night eat sago cream,

‘ ’Twould make me blush to tell my dream ;

‘ If I eat lobster, ’tis so warming,

‘ That ev’ry man I see looks charming ;

‘ Wherefore had not the filthy fellow

‘ Laid Rochester upon your pillow ?

‘ I vow and swear, I think the present

‘ Had been as modest and as decent.

‘ Who has her virtue in her power ?

‘ Each day has its unguarded hour ;

‘ Always in danger of undoing,

‘ A pawn, a shrimp may prove our ruin !

‘ The shepherdefs, who lives on fallad,

‘ To cool her youth, controuls her palate ;

‘ Should Dian’s maids turn liqu’rish livers,

‘ And of huge lampreys rob the rivers,

‘ Then all beside each glade and vисто

‘ You’d see nymphs lying like Calisto.

‘ The man who meant to heat your blood,

‘ Needs not himself such vicious food——

In this, I own, your aunt is clear,

I sent you what I well might spare :

For when I see you, (without joking)

Your eyes, lips, breasts are so provoking,

They set my heart more cock-a-hoop,

Than could whole seas of cray-fish soupe,

PROLOGUE,

DESIGNED FOR THE

PASTORAL TRAGEDY OF DIONE.

THERE was a time (oh were those days renew'd!)
Ere tyrant laws had woman's will subdu'd;
Then nature rul'd, and love devoid of art,
Spoke the consenting language of the heart.
Love uncontroll'd! insipid poor delight!
'Tis the restraint that whets our appetite.
Behold the beasts who range the forest free,
Behold the birds who fly from tree to tree;
In their amours see nature's power appear!
And do they love? yes—one month in the year.
Were these the pleasures of the golden reign?
And did free nature thus instruct the swain?
I envy not, ye nymphs, your am'rous bowers:
Such harmless swains! I'm ev'n content with ours.
But yet there's something in these sylvan scenes
That tells our fancy what the lover means;
Name but the mossy bank, and moon-light grove,
Is there a heart that does not beat with love?

To-night we treat you with such country fare,
Then for your lovers sake our author spare.
He draws no Hemskirk boors, or home-bred clowns,
But the soft shepherds of Arcadia's downs.

When Paris on the three his judgment pass'd;
I hope, you'll own the shepherd show'd his taste:
And Jove, all know, was a good judge of beauty,
Who made the nymph Calisto break her duty;

Then was the country nymph no aukward thing.
See what strange revolutions time can bring !

Yet still methinks our author's fate I dread,
Were it not safer beaten paths to tread
Of tragedy ; than o'er wide heaths to stray,
And seeking strange adventures lose his way ?
No trumpet's clangor makes his heroine start,
And tears the soldier from her bleeding heart ;
He, foolish bard ! nor pomp or show regards.
Without the witness of a hundred guards
His lovers sigh their vows, — if sleep should take ye,
He has no battle, no loud drum to wake ye.
What, no such shifts ? there's danger in't, 'tis true ;
Yet spare him, as he gives you something new.

SWEET WILLIAM'S
FAREWEL TO
BLACK-EY'D SUSAN.

A BALLAD.

I.

ALL in the Downs the fleet was moor'd,
The streamers waving in the wind,
When black-ey'd Susan came on board,
Oh! where shall I my true love find!
Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true,
If my sweet William sails among the crew,

II.

William, who high upon the yard,
Rock'd with the billows to and fro,
Soon as her well-known voice he heard,
He sigh'd and cast his eyes below:
The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands,
And (quick as lightning) on the deck he stands.

III.

So the sweet-lark, high-pois'd in air,
Shuts close his pinions to his breast,
(If, chance, his mate's shrill call he hear)
And drops at once into her nest.
The noblest captain in the British fleet,
Might envy William's lips those kisses sweet.

IV.

O Susan, Susan, lovely dear,
My vows shall ever true remain;
Let me kiss off that falling tear,
We only part to meet again.

Change, as ye list, ye winds; my heart shall be
The faithful compass that still points to thee.

V.

Believe not what the landmen say,
Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind:
They'll tell thee, sailors, when away,
In ev'ry port a mistress find.
Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
For thou art present wheresoe'er I go.

VI.

If to far India's coast we sail,
Thy eyes are seen in di'monds bright,
Thy breath is Africk's spicy gale,
Thy skin is ivory, so white.
Thus ev'ry beauteous object that I view,
Wakes in my soul some charms of lovely Sue.

VII.

Though battle calls me from thy arms,
Let not my pretty Susan mourn;
Though cannons roar, yet safe from harms,
William shall to his dear return.
Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,
Lest precious tears should drop from Susan's eye.

VIII.

The boatswain gave the dreadful word,
The sails their swelling bosom spread,
No longer must she stay aboard:
They kiss'd, she sigh'd, he hung his head;
Her lefs'ning boat, unwilling rows to land:
Adieu, she cries! and wav'd her lily hand.

THE LADY'S LAMENTATION.

A BALLAD.

I.

PHYLLIDA, that lov'd to dream
In the grove, or by the stream;
Sigh'd on velvet pillow.
What, alas! should fill her head
But a fountain or a mead,
Water and a willow?

II.

Love in cities never dwells,
He delights in rural cells,
Which sweet wood-bine covers.
What are your assemblies then?
There, 'tis true we see more men;
But much fewer lovers.

III.

Oh, how chang'd the prospect grows!
Flocks and herds to fops and beaus,
Coxcombs without number!
Moon and stars that shone so bright,
To the torch and waxen light,
And whole nights at Ombre.

IV.

Pleasant as it is, to hear
Scandal tickling in our ear,
Ev'n of our own mothers;
In the chit-chat of the day,
To us is pay'd, when we're away,
What we lent to others.

V.

Though the fav'rite toast I reign ;
 Wine, they say, that prompts the vein,
 Heightens defamation.
 Must I live 'twixt spite and fear,
 Ev'ry day grow handsomer,
 And lose my reputation ?

VI.

Thus the fair to sighs gave way,
 Her empty purse beside her lay.
 Nymph, ah cease thy sorrow.
 Though curst fortune frown to-night ;
 This odious town can give delight
 If you win to-morrow.

DAMON AND CUPID.

A SONG.

I.

THE sun was now withdrawn,
The shepherds home were sped;
The moon wide o'er the lawn
Her silver mantle spread;
When Damon staid behind,
And saunter'd in the grove.
Will ne'er a nymph be kind,
And give me love for love?

II.

Oh! those were golden hours,
When love devoid of cares,
In all Arcadia's bow'rs
Lodg'd swains and nymphs by pairs!
But now from wood and plain
Flies ev'ry sprightly lass,
No joys for me remain,
In shades, or on the grass.

III.

The winged boy draws near,
And thus the swain reproves,
While beauty revel'd here,
My game lay in the groves;
At court I never fail
To scatter round my arrows,
Men fall all thick as hail;
And maidens love like sparrows.

IV.

Then, swain, if me you need,
 Straight lay your sheep-hook down ;
 Throw by your oaten reed,
 And haste away to town.
 So well I'm known at court,
 None ask where Cupid dwells ;
 But readily resort
 To B——n's or L——ll's.

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DAPHNIS AND CHLOE.

A SONG.

DAPHNIS stood pensive in the shade,
With arms across, and head reclin'd;
Pale looks accus'd the cruel maid,
And sighs reliev'd his love-sick mind :
His tuneful pipe all broken lay,
Looks, sighs, and actions seem'd to say,
My Chloe is unkind.

II.

Why ring the woods with warbling throats?
Ye larks, ye linnets, cease your strains ;
I faintly hear in your sweet notes,
My Chloe's voice that wakes my pains :
Yet why should you your song forbear ?
Your mates delight your song to hear,
But Chloe mine disdains,

III.

As thus he melancholy stood,
Dejected as the lonely dove,
Sweet sounds broke gently through the wood.
I feel the sound : my heart-strings move.
'Twas not the nightingale that sung ;
No. 'Tis my Chloe's sweeter tongue.
Hark, hark, what says my love !

IV.

How foolish is the nymph (she cries)
Who trifles with her lover's pain !
Nature still speaks in woman's eyes,
Our artful lips were made to feign.
O Daphnis, Daphnis, 'twas my pride,
'Twas not my heart thy love deny'd,
Come back, dear youth, again,

V.

As t'other day my hand he seiz'd,
 My blood with thrilling motion flew:
 Sudden I put on looks displeas'd,
 And hasty from his hold withdrew.
 'Twas fear alone, thou simple swain.
 Then hadst thou prest my hand again,
 My heart had yielded too!

VI.

'Tis true thy tuneful reed I blam'd,
 That swell'd thy lip and rosy cheek;
 Think not thy skill in song defam'd,
 That lip should other pleasures seek:
 Much, much thy music I approve;
 Yet break thy pipe, for more I love,
 Much more to hear thee speak.

VII.

My heart forebodes that I'm betray'd,
 Daphnis I fear is ever gone;
 Last night with Delia's dog he play'd,
 Love by such trifles first comes on.
 Now, now dear shepherd, come away,
 My tongue would now my heart obey.
 Ah, Chloe, thou art won!

VIII.

The youth stept forth with hasty pace,
 And found where wishing Chloe lay;
 Shame sudden lighten'd in her face,
 Confus'd, she knew not what to say.
 At last in broken words, she cry'd;
 To-morrow you in vain had try'd,
 But I am lost to-day!

CONTEMPLATION

ON

NIGHT.

WHether amid the gloom of night I stray,
Or my glad eyes enjoy revolving day,
Still nature's various face informs my sense,
Of an all-wise, all-pow'rful Providence.

When the gay sun first breaks the shades of night,
And strikes the distant eastern hills with light,
Colour returns, the plains their liv'ry wear,
And a bright verdure clothes the smiling year;
The blooming flow'rs with opening beauties glow,
And grazing flocks their milky fleeces show,
The barren cliffs with chalky fronts arise,
And a pure azure arches o'er the skies.
But when the gloomy reign of night returns,
Stript of her fading pride all nature mourns :
The trees no more their wonted verdure boast,
But weep in dewy tears their beauty lost ;
No distant land skips draw our curious eyes,
Wrapt in night's robe the whole creation lies.
Yet still, ev'n now, while darkness clothes the land,
We view the traces of th' almighty hand ;
Millions of stars in heav'n's wide vault appear,
And with new glories hang the boundless sphere :
The silver moon her western couch forsakes,
And o'er the skies her nightly circle makes,

Her solid globe beats back the sunny rays,
And to the world her borrow'd light repays.

Whether those stars that twinkling lustre send,
Are suns, and rolling worlds those suns attend,
Man may conjecture, and new schemes declare,
Yet all his systems but conjectures are ;
But this we know, that heav'n's eternal King,
Who bid this universe from nothing spring,
Can at his word bid num'rous worlds appear,
And rising worlds th' all-pow'rful word shall hear.

When to the western main the sun descends,
To other lands a rising day he lends,
The spreading dawn another shepherd spies,
The wakeful flocks from their warm folds arise,
Refresh'd, the peasant seeks his early toil,
And bids the plow correct the fallow soil,
While we in sleep's embraces waste the night,
The climes oppos'd enjoy meridian light ;
And when those lands the busy sun forsakes,
With us again the rosy morning wakes ;
In lazy sleep the night rolls swift away,
And neither clime laments his absent ray.

When the pure soul is from the body flown,
No more shall night's alternate reign be known :
The sun no more shall rolling light bestow,
But from th' Almighty streams of glory flow.
Oh, may some nobler thought my soul employ
Than empty, transient, sublunary joy !
The stars shall drop, the sun shall lose his flame,
But thou, O God, for ever shine the same,

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THOUGHT
ON
ETERNITY.

ERE the foundations of the world were laid,
Ere kindling light th' Almighty word obey'd,
Thou wert; and when the subterraneous flame
Shall burst its prison, and devour this frame,
From angry heav'n when the keen lightning flies,
When fervent heat dissolves the melting skies,
Thou still shalt be; still, as thou wert before,
And know no change, when time shall be no more.
O endless thought! divine eternity!
Th' immortal soul shares but a part of thee;
For thou wert present when our life began,
When the warm dust shot up in breathing man.

Ah! what is life? with ills incompass'd round,
Amidst our hopes, fate strikes the sudden wound:
To-day the statesman of new honour dreams,
To-morrow death destroys his airy schemes;
Is mouldy treasure in thy chest confin'd;
Think all that treasure thou must leave behind;
Thy heir with smiles shall view thy blazon'd herse,
And all thy hoards with lavish hand disperse.
Should certain fate th' impending blow delay,
Thy mirth will sicken, and thy bloom decay;

Then feeble age will all thy nerves disarm,
No more thy blood its narrow channels warm.
Who then would wish to stretch this narrow span,
To suffer life beyond the date of man?

The virtuous soul pursues a nobler aim,
And life regards but as a fleeting dream:
She longs to wake, and wishes to get free,
To launch from earth into eternity.
For while the boundless theme extends our thought,
Ten thousand thousand rolling years are nought.

MY OWN

E P I T A P H.

LIFE is a jest; and all things show it,
I thought so once; but now I know it.

PASTORAL TRAGEDY.

The first of these is the fact that the
 world is a very different place from what it
 was a few years ago. The progress of
 science and the discovery of new
 worlds have changed the face of the
 earth.

MY OWN

The second of these is the fact that the
 world is a very different place from what it
 was a few years ago. The progress of
 science and the discovery of new
 worlds have changed the face of the
 earth.

E P T A B H.

The third of these is the fact that the
 world is a very different place from what it
 was a few years ago. The progress of
 science and the discovery of new
 worlds have changed the face of the
 earth.

It is a fact; and all things flow from it.
 I thought so once; but now I know it.

DIONE,

A

PASTORAL TRAGEDY.

—Sunt Numina amanti,
Sævit et injusta lege relicta Venus.

TIBULL. Eleg. 5. Lib. 1.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

M E N.

EVANDER under the name of **LYCIDAS**.

CLEANTHES.

SHEPHERDS.

W O M E N.

DIONE under the name of **ALEXIS**.

PARTHENIA.

LAURA.

SCENE, ARCADIA.

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D I O N E,

A

PASTORAL TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A plain, at the foot of a steep craggy mountain.

DIONE. LAURA.

LAURA.

WHY dost thou fly me? stay, unhappy fair,
Seek not these horrid caverns of despair;
To trace thy steps the midnight air I bore,
Trod the brown desert, and unshelter'd moor:
Three times the lark has sung his matin lay,
And rose on dewy wing to meet the day,
Since first I found thee, stretch'd in pensive mood,
Where laurels border Ladon's silver flood.

DIONE.

O let my soul with grateful thanks o'erflow!
'Tis to thy hand my daily life I owe.
Like the weak lamb you rais'd me from the plain,
Too faint to bear bleak winds and beating rain;
Each day I share thy bowl and clean repast,
Each night thy roof defends the chilly blast.
But vain is all thy friendship, vain thy care:
Forget a wretch abandon'd to despair.

LAURA.

Despair will fly thee, when thou shalt impart
 The fatal secret that torments thy heart;
 Disclose thy sorrows to my faithful ear,
 Instruct those eyes to give thee tear for tear.
 Love, love's the cause; our forests speak thy flame,
 The rocks have learnt to sigh Evander's name.
 If falt'ring shame thy bashful tongue restrain,
 If thou hast look'd, and blush'd, and sigh'd in vain;
 Say, in what grove thy lovely shepherd strays,
 Tell me what mountains warble with his lays;
 Thither I'll speed me, and with moving art
 Draw soft confessions from his melting heart.

DIONE.

Thy gen'rous care has touch'd my secret woe.
 Love bids these scalding tears incessant flow,
 Ill-fated love! O, say, ye sylvan maids,
 Who range wide forests and sequester'd shades,
 Say where Evander bled, point out the ground
 That yet is purple with the savage wound.
 Yonder he lies; I hear the bird of prey;
 High o'er those cliffs the raven wings his way;
 Hark how he croaks! he scents the murder near.
 O may no greedy beak his visage tear!
 Shield him, ye Cupids; strip the Paphian grove,
 And strow unfading myrtle o'er my love!
 Down, heaving heart.

LAURA.

 The mournful tale disclose.

DIONE.

Let not my tears intrude on thy repose.

Yet if thy friendship still the cause request;
 I'll speak; though sorrow rend my lab'ring breast.
 Know then, fair shepherdes; no honest swain
 Taught me the duties of the peaceful plain;
 Unus'd to sweet content, no flocks I keep,
 Nor browsing goats that overhang the steep.
 Born where Orchomenos proud turrets shine,
 I trace my birth from long illustrious line,
 Why was I train'd amidst Arcadia's court?
 Love ever revels in that gay resort.
 Whene'er Evander past, my smitten heart
 Heav'd frequent sighs, and felt unusual smart.
 Ah! hadst thou seen with what sweet grace he mov'd!
 Yet why that wish? for Laura then had lov'd.

LAURA.

Distrust me not; thy secret wrongs impart.

DIONE.

Forgive the fallies of a breaking heart.
 Evander's sighs his mutual flame confess;
 The growing passion labour'd in his breast;
 To me he came; my heart with rapture sprung,
 To see the blushes, when his falt'ring tongue
 First said, I love. My eyes consent reveal,
 And plighted vows our faithful passion seal.
 Where's now the lovely youth? he's lost, he's slain,
 And the pale corse lies breathless on the plain!

LAURA.

Are thus the hopes of constant lovers paid?
 If thus——ye powers, from love defend the maid!

DIONE.

Now have twelve mornings warm'd the purple east,
 Since my dear hunter rous'd the tusky beast;

Swift flew the foaming monster thro' the wood,
 Swift as the wind, his eager steps pursu'd :
 'Twas then the savage turn'd ; then fell the youth,
 And his dear blood distain'd the barb'rous tooth.

LAURA.

Was there none near ? no ready succour found ?
 Nor healing herb to stanch the spouting wound ?

DIONE.

In vain through pathless wood the hunters cross,
 And fought with anxious eye their master lost ;
 In vain their frequent hollows echo'd shrill,
 And his lov'd name was sent from hill to hill ;
 Evander hears you not, he's lost, he's slain,
 And the pale corse lies breathless on the plain.

LAURA.

Has yet no clown (who, wandering from the way,
 Beats ev'ry bush to raise the lamb astray)
 Observ'd the fatal spot ?

DIONE.

—————O, if ye pass
 Where purple murder dies the wither'd grass,
 With pious finger gently close his eyes,
 And let his grave with decent verdure rise. [Weeps.

LAURA.

Behold the turtle who has lost her mate :
 Awhile with drooping wing she mourns his fate,
 Sullen, awhile she seeks the darkest grove,
 And cooing meditates the murder'd dove ;
 But time the rueful image wears away,
 Again she's cheer'd, again she seeks the day.
 Spare then thy beauty, and no longer pine.

DIONE.

Yet sure some turtle's love has equall'd mine,
 Who, when the hawk has snatch'd her mate away,
 Hath never known the glad return of day.

When my fond father saw my faded eye,
 And on my livid cheek the roses dye ;
 When catching sighs my wasted bosom mov'd,
 My looks, my sighs confirm'd him that I lov'd.
 He knew not that Evander was my flame,
 Evander dead ! my passion still the same !
 He came, he threatned ; with paternal sway
 Cleanthes nam'd, and fix'd the nuptial day :
 O cruel kindness ! too severely prest !
 I scorn his honours, and his wealth detest.

LAURA.

How vain is force ! love ne'er can be compell'd.

DIONE.

Though bound by duty, yet my heart rebell'd.
 One night, when sleep had hush'd all busy spies,
 And the pale moon had journey'd half the skies ;
 Softly I rose and drest ; with silent tread,
 Unbarr'd the gates ; and to these mountains fled.
 Here let me sooth the melancholy hours !
 Close me, ye woods, within your twilight bow'rs !
 Where my calm soul may settled sorrow know,
 And no Cleanthes interrupt my woe

[Melancholy music is heard at a distance.

With importuning love——On yonder plain
 Advances slow a melancholy train ;
 Black cypress boughs their drooping heads adorn.

LAURA.

Alas ! Menalcas to his grave is born.

Behold the victim of Parthenia's pride !
He saw, he sigh'd, he lov'd, was scorn'd and dy'd.

DIONE.

Where dwells this beauteous tyrant of the plains ?
Where may I see her ?

LAURA.

Ask the sighing swains.
They best can speak the conquests of her eyes,
Whoever sees her, loves ; who loves her, dies.

DIONE.

Perhaps untimely fate her flame hath crost,
And she, like me, hath her Evander lost.
How my soul pities her !

LAURA.

If pity move
Your generous bosom, pity those who love.
There late arriv'd among our sylvan race
A stranger shepherd, who with lonely pace
Visits those mountain pines at dawn of day,
Where oft' Parthenia takes her early way
To rouse the chase ; mad with his am'rous pain,
He stops and raves ; then sullen walks again.
Parthenia's name is born by passing gales,
And talking hills repeat it to the dales.
Come, let us from this vale of sorrow go,
Nor let the mournful scene prolong thy woe.

[Exeunt.]

* S C E N E II.

Shepherds and shepherdesses, (crown'd with garlands
of cypress and yew) bearing the body of MENAL-
CAS.

I SHEPHERD.

Here gently rest the corse——with faltring breath
Thus spake Menalcas on the verge of death.
' Belov'd Palemon, hear a dying friend ;
' See, where yon hills with craggy brows ascend,
' Low in the valley where the mountain grows,
' There first I saw her, there began my woes.
' When I am cold, may there this clay be laid ;
' There often strays the dear the cruel maid,
' There as she walks, perhaps you'll hear her say,
' (While a kind gushing tear shall force its way)
' How could my stubborn heart relentless prove ?
' Ah poor Menalcas——all thy fault was love !

2 SHEPHERD.

When pitying lions o'er a carcase groan,
And hungry tygers bleeding kids bemoan ;
When the lean wolf laments the mangled sheep ;
Then shall Parthenia o'er Menalcas weep.

I SHEPHERD.

When famish'd panthers seek their morning food,
And monsters roar along the desert wood ;

* This and the following scene are form'd upon the novel of
Marcella in Don Quixote.

When hissing vipers rustle through the brake,
 Or in the path-way rears the speckled snake;
 The wary swain th' approaching peril spies,
 And through some distant road securely flies.
 Fly then, ye swains, from beauty's surer wound;
 Such was the fate our poor Menalcas found!

2 SHEPHERD.

What shepherd does not mourn Menalcas slain?
 Kill'd by a barbarous woman's proud disdain!
 Whoe'er attempts to bend her scornful mind,
 Cries to the deserts, and pursues the wind.

1 SHEPHERD.

With ev'ry grace Menalcas was endow'd,
 His merits dazled all the sylvan croud,
 If you would know his pipe's melodious sound,
 Ask all the echoes of those hills around,
 For they have learn'd his strains; who shall rehearse
 The strength, the cadence of his tuneful verse?
 Go, read those lofty poplars; there you'll find
 Some tender sonnet grow on ev'ry rind.

2 SHEPHERD.

Yet what avails his skill? Parthenia flies.
 Can merit hope success in woman's eyes?

1 SHEPHERD.

Why was Parthenia form'd of softest mold?
 Why does her heart such savage nature hold?
 O ye kind gods! or all her charms efface,
 Or tame her heart——so spare the shepherd race.

2 SHEPHERD.

As fade the flowers which on the grave I cast;
 So may Parthenia's transient beauty waste!

I SHEPHERD.

What woman ever counts the fleeting years,
 Or sees the wrinkle which her forehead wears ?
 Thinking her feature never shall decay,
 This swain she scorns, from that she turns away.
 But know, as when the rose her bud unfolds,
 Awhile each breast the short-liv'd fragrance holds :
 When the dry stalk lets drop her shrivell'd pride,
 The lovely ruin's ever thrown aside.
 So shall Parthenia be.

2 SHEPHERD.

————— See, she appears,
 To boast her spoils, and triumph in our tears.

S C E N E III.

Parthenia appears from the mountain.

P A R T H E N I A. S H E P H E R D S.

I SHEPHERD.

Why this way dost thou turn thy baneful eyes,
 Pernicious basilisk ? lo ! there he lies,
 There lies the youth thy curst beauty slew ;
 See, at thy presence, how he bleeds anew !
 Look down, enjoy thy murder.

P A R T H E N I A.

————— Spare my fame ;
 I come to clear a virgin's injur'd name.
 If I'm a basilisk, the danger fly,
 Shun the swift glances of my venom'd eye :

If I'm a murd'rer, why approach ye near,
And to the dagger lay your bosom bare ?

I SHEPHERD.

What heart is proof against that face divine ?
Love is not in our power.

PARTHENIA.

Is love in mine ?

If e'er I trifled with a shepherd's pain,
Or with false hope his passion strove to gain ;
Then might you justly curse my savage mind,
Then might you rank me with the serpent kind :
But I ne'er trifled with a shepherd's pain,
Nor with false hopes his passion strove to gain ;
'Tis to his rash pursuit he owes his fate,
I was not cruel ; he was obstinate.

I SHEPHERD.

Hear this, ye sighing shepherds, and despair.
Unhappy Lycidas, thy hour is near !
Since the same barb'rous hand hath sign'd thy doom,
We'll lay thee in our lov'd Menalcas' tomb.

PARTHENIA.

Why will intruding man my peace destroy ?
Let me content, and solitude enjoy ;
Free was I born, my freedom to maintain,
Early I sought the unambitious plain.
Most women's weak resolves like reeds will ply,
Shake with each breath, and bend with ev'ry sigh ;
Mine, like an oak, whose firm roots deep descend,
No breath of love can shake, no sign can bend.
If ye unhappy Lycidas would save ;
Go seek him, lead him to Menalcas' grave ;

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Forbid his eyes with flowing grief to rain,
 Like him Menalcas wept, but wept in vain;
 Bid him his heart-consuming groans give o'er;
 Tell him, I heard such piercing groans before,
 And heard unmov'd. O Lycidas be wise,
 Prevent thy fate.——lo! there Menalcas lies.

I SHEPHERD.

Now all the melancholy rites are paid,
 And o'er his grave the weeping marble laid;
 Let's seek our charge; the flocks dispersing wide,
 Whiten with moving fleece the mountain's side.
 Trust not, ye swains, the lightning of her eye,
 Left ye, like him, should love, despair, and dye.

[Exeunt Shepherds, &c. Parthenia remains
 in a melancholy posture looking on the grave
 of Menalcas.]

Enter LYCIDAS.

S C E N E IV.

LYCIDAS. PARTHENIA.

LYCIDAS.

When shall my steps have rest? Through all the wood,
 And by the winding banks of Ladon's flood
 I sought my love. O say, ye skipping fawns,
 (Who range entangled shades and daisy'd lawns)
 If ye have seen her! say ye warbling race,
 (Who measure on swift wing th' aerial space,
 And view below hills, dales, and distant shores)
 Where shall I find her whom my soul adores!

S C E N E V.

LYCIDAS. PARTHENIA. DIONE.
LAURA.

[DIONE and LAURA at a distance.

LYCIDAS.

What do I see? No. Fancy mocks my eyes,
And bids the dear deluding vision rise.
'Tis she. My springing heart her presence feels.
See, prostrate Lycidas before thee kneels.

[Kneeling to Parthenia.

Why will Parthenia turn her face away?

PARTHENIA.

Who calls Parthenia? hah!

[She starts from her melancholy; and seeing
Lycidas, flies into the wood.

LYCIDAS.

Stay, virgin, stay.
O wing my feet, kind love. See, see, she bounds,
Fleet as the mountain roe, when prest by hounds.
[He pursues her. Dione faints in the arms of Laura.

LAURA.

What means this trembling? all her colour flies,
And life is quite unstrung. Ah! lift thy eyes,
And answer me; speak, speak, 'tis Laura calls.
Speech has forsook her lips.—She faints, she falls.
Fan her, ye Zephyrs, with your balmy breath,
And bring her quickly from the shades of death:
Blow, ye cool gales. See, see, the forest shakes
With coming winds! she breathes, she moves, she wakes.

DIONE.

Ah false Evander!

LAURA.

————— Calm thy sobbing breast.
Say, what new sorrow has thy heart oppress.

DIONE.

Didst thou not hear his sighs and suppliant tone?
Didst thou not hear the pitying mountain grone?
Didst thou not see him bend his suppliant knee?
Thus in my happy days he knelt to me,
And pour'd forth all his soul! see how he strains,
And lessens to the sight o'er yonder plains
To keep the fair in view! run, virgin, run,
Hear not his vows; I heard, and was undone!

LAURA.

Let not imaginary terrors fright.
Some dark delusion swims before thy sight.
I saw Parthenia from the mountain's brow,
And Lycidas with prostrate duty bow;
Swift as on falcon's wing, I saw her fly,
And heard the cavern to his groans reply.
Why stream thy tears for sorrows not thy own?

DIONE.

Oh! where are honour, faith, and justice flown?
Perjur'd Evander!

LAURA.

————— Death has laid him low,
Touch not the mournful string that wakes thy woe.

DIONE.

That am'rous swain, whom Lycidas you name,
(Whose faithless bosom feels another flame)

Is my once kind Evander——yes——'twas he,
He lives.——But lives, alas! no more for me.

LAURA.

Let not thy frantic words confefs despair.

DIONE.

What, know I not his voice, his mien, his air?
Yes, I that treach'rous voice with joy believ'd,
That voice, that mien, that air my soul deceiv'd,
If my dear shepherd love the lawns and glades,
With him I'll range the lawns and seek the shades,
With him through solitary desarts rove.
But could he leave me for another love?
O base ingratitude!

LAURA.

—————Suspend thy grief,
And let my friendly counsel bring relief
To thy desponding soul. Parthenia's ear
Is barr'd for ever to the lover's prayer;
Evander courts disdain, he follows scorn,
And in the passing winds his vows are born.
Soon will he find that all in vain he strove
To tame her bosom; then his former love
Shall wake his soul, then will he sighing blame
His heart inconstant, and his perjur'd flame:
Then shall he at Dione's feet implore,
Lament his broken faith, and change no more.

DIONE.

Perhaps this cruel nymph well knows to feign
Forbidding speech, coy looks, and cold disdain,
To raise his passion. Such are female arts,
To hold in safer snares inconstant hearts!

LAURA.

Parthenia's breast is steel'd with real scorn.

DIONE.

And dost thou think Evander will return?

LAURA.

Forgo thy sex, lay all thy robes aside,
Strip off these ornaments of female pride;
The shepherd's vest must hide thy graceful air,
With the bold manly step a swain appear;
Then with Evander may'st thou rove unknown,
Then let thy tender eloquence be shown;
Then the new fury of his heart controul,
And with Dione's sufferings touch his soul.

DIONE.

Sweet as refreshing dews, or summer showers
To the long parching thirst of drooping flowers;
Grateful as fanning gales to fainting swains,
And soft as trickling balm to bleeding pains,
Such are thy words. The sex shall be resign'd,
No more shall breaded gold these tresses bind;
The shepherd's garb the woman shall disguise.
If he has lost all love, may friendship's ties
Unite me to his heart!

LAURA.

—————Go, prosp'rous maid,
May smiling love thy faithful wishes aid.
Be now Alexis call'd. With thee I'll rove,
And watch thy wand'rer thro' the mazy grove;
Let me be honour'd with a sister's name;
For thee, I feel a more than sister's flame.

DIONE.

Perhaps my shepherd has outstript her haste.
 Think'st thou, when out of sight, she flew so fast?
 One sudden glance might turn her savage mind;
 May she like Daphne fly, nor look behind,
 Maintain her scorn, his eager flame despise,
 Nor view Evander with Dione's eyes!

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A C T II. S C E N E. I.

Lycidas lying on the grave of Menalcas.

LYCIDAS.

WHEN shall these scalding fountains cease to
flow?

How long will life sustain this load of woe:
Why glows the morn? roll back, thou source of light,
And feed my sorrows with eternal night.
Come, fable death! give, give the welcome stroke;
The raven calls thee from yon blasted oak.
What pious care my ghastful lid shall close?
What decent hand my frozen limbs compose?
O happy shepherd, free from anxious pains,
Who now art wandring in the sighing plains
Of blest Elysium; where in myrtle groves
Enamour'd ghosts bemoan their former loves.
Open, thou silent grave; for lo! I come
To meet Menalcas in the fragrant gloom;
There shall my bosom burn with friendship's flame,
The same our passion, and our fate the same;
There, like two nightingales on neighb'ring boughs,
Alternate strains shall mourn our frustrate vows.
But if cold death should close Parthenia's eye,
And should her beauteous form come gliding by;
Friendship would soon in jealous fear be lost,
And kindling hate pursue thy rival ghost.

S C E N E II.

LYCIDAS. DIONE in a shepherd's habit.

LYCIDAS.

Hah ! who comes here ? turn hence, be timely wife ;
Trust not thy safety to Parthenia's eyes.
As from the bearing faulcon flies the dove,
So, wing'd with fear, Parthenia flies from love.

DIONE.

If in these vales the fatal beauty stray,
From the cold marble rise ; let's haste away,
Why lie you panting, like the smitten deer ?
Trust not the dangers which you bid me fear.

LYCIDAS.

Bid the lur'd lark, whom tangling nets surprise,
On soaring pinion rove the spacious skies ;
Bid the cag'd linnet range the leafy grove ;
Then bid my captive heart get loose from love.
The snares of death are o'er me. Hence ; beware ;
Lest you should see her, and like me despair.

DIONE.

No. Let her come ; and seek this vale's recess ;
In all the beauteous negligence of dress ;
Though Cupid send a shaft in ev'ry glance,
Though all the graces in her step advance,
My heart can stand it all. Be firm, my breast ;
Th' ensnaring oath, the broken vow detest :
That flame, which other charms have pow'r to move,
O give it not the sacred name of love !

'Tis perjury, fraud, and meditated lies.
 Love's seated in the soul, and never dies.
 What then avail her charms? my constant heart
 Shall gaze secure, and mock a second dart.

LYCIDAS.

But you perhaps a happier fate have found,
 And the same hand that gave, now heals the wound
 Or art thou left abandon'd and forlorn,
 A wretch, like me, the sport of pride and scorn?

DIONE.

O tell me, shepherd, hath thy faithless maid
 False to her vow thy flatter'd hope betray'd?
 Did her smooth speech engage thee to believe?
 Did she protest and swear, and then deceive?
 Such are the pangs I feel!

LYCIDAS.

—————The haughty fair
 Contemns my suff'rings, and disdains to hear.
 Let meaner beauties learn'd in female snares
 Entice the swain with half-consenting airs;
 Such vulgar arts ne'er aid her conqu'ring eyes,
 And yet, where-e'er she turns, a lover sighs.
 Vain is the steady constancy you boast;
 All other love at sight of her is lost.

DIONE.

True constancy no time, no power can move.
 He that hath known to change, ne'er knew to love.
 Though the dear author of my hapless flame
 Pursue another; still my heart's the same.
 Am I for ever left? (excuse these tears)
 May your kind friendship soften all my cares!

LYCIDAS.

What comfort can a wretch, like me, bestow?

DIONE.

He best can pity who hath felt the woe.

LYCIDAS.

Since diff'rent objects have our souls possess'd,
No rival fears our friendship shall molest.

DIONE.

Come let us leave the shade of these brown hills,
And drive our flocks beside the steaming rills,
Should the fair tyrant to these vales return,
How would thy breast with double fury burn!
Go hence, and seek thy peace.

S C E N E III.

LYCIDAS. DIONE. LAURA.

LAURA.

——— Fly, fly this place;
Beware of love; the proudest of her race
This way approaches: from among the pines,
Where from the steep the winding path declines,
I saw the nymph descend.

LYCIDAS.

——— She comes, she comes;
From her the passing zephyrs steal perfumes,
As from the vi'let's bank; with odours sweet
Breathes ev'ry gale; spring blooms beneath her feet.
Yes, 'tis my fairest; here she's wont to rove.

LAURA.

Say, by what signs I might have known thy love?

LYCIDAS.

My love is fairer than the snowy breast
Of the tall swan, whose proudly-swellling chest
Divides the wave; her tresses loose behind,
Play on her neck, and wanton in the wind;
The rising blushes, which her cheek o'er-spread,
Are op'ning roses in the lily's bed.
Know'st thou Parthenia?

LAURA:

Wretched is the slave
Who serves such pride! behold Menalcas' grave!
Yet if Alexis and this sighing swain
Wish to behold the tyrant of the plain,
Let us behind these myrtles twining arms
Retire unseen; from thence survey her charms,
Wild as the chanting thrush upon the spray,
At man's approach she swiftly flies away.
Like the young hare, I've seen the panting maid
Stop, listen, run; of ev'ry wind afraid.

LYCIDAS.

And wilt thou never from thy vows depart?
Shepherd, beware——now fortify thy heart.

[To Dione.

[Lycidas, Dione, and Laura retire behind the
boughs.

S C E N E IV.

PARTHENIA. LYCIDAS. DIONE.
LAURA.

PARTHENIA.

This melancholy scene demands a grone.
Hah ! what inscription marks the weeping stone ?
' O pow'r of beauty ! here Menalcas lies.
' Gaze not, ye shepherds, on Parthenia's eyes.'
Why did Heav'n form me with such polish'd care ?
Why cast my features in a mold so fair ?
If blooming beauty was a blessing meant,
Why are my sighing hours deny'd content ?
The downy peach, that glows with sunny dyes,
Feeds the black snail, and lures voracious flies ;
The juicy pear invites the feather'd kind,
And pecking finches scoop the golden rind ;
But beauty suffers more pernicious wrongs,
Blasted by envy, and censorious tongues.
How happy lives the nymph, whose comely face
And pleasing glances boast sufficient grace
To wound the swain she loves ! no jealous fears
Shall vex her nuptial state with nightly tears,
Nor am'rous youths, to push their foul pretence,
Infest her days with dull impertinence.
But why talk I of love ? my guarded heart
Disowns his pow'r, and turns aside the dart.

Hark ! from his hollow tomb Menalcas cries,
 ' Gaze not, ye shepherds, on Parthenia's eyes.'
 Come, Lycidas, the mournful lay peruse.
 Lest thou, like him, Parthenia's eyes accuse.

[She stands in a melancholy posture looking on
 the tomb.

LYCIDAS.

Call'd she not Lycidas ?——I come, my fair;
 See gen'rous pity melts into a tear,
 And her heart softens. Now's the tender hour,
 Assist me, love, exert thy sov'reign power
 To tame the scornful maid.

DIONE.

——Rash swain, be wise:
 'Tis not from thee or him, from love she flies.
 Leave her, forget her. [They hold Lycidas.

LAURA.

——Why this furious haste ?

LYCIDAS.

Unhand me ; loose me.

DIONE.

——Sister, hold him fast.
 To follow her, is, to prolong despair.
 Shepherd, you must not go.

LYCIDAS.

——Bold youth, forbear.
 Hear me, Parthenia.

PARTHENIA.

——From behind the shade
 Methought a voice some list'ning spy betray'd.
 Yes, I'm observ'd. [She runs out.

LYCIDAS.

——— Stay, nymph ; thy flight suspend
 She hears me not—when will my sorrows end !
 As over-spent with toil, my heaving breast
 Beats quick. 'Tis death alone can give me rest.
 [He remains in a fixt melancholy.

S C E N E V.

LYCIDAS. DIONE. LAURA.

LAURA.

Recall thy scatter'd sense, bid reason wake,
 Subdue thy passion.

LYCIDAS.

——— Shall I never speak ?
 She's gone, she's gone—kind shepherd, let me rest
 My troubled head upon thy friendly breast.
 The forest seems to move,—O cursed state !
 I doom'd to love, and she condemn'd to hate !
 Tell me, Alexis, art thou still the same ?
 Did not her brighter eyes put out the flame
 Of thy first love ? did not thy flutt'ring heart,
 Whene'er she rais'd her look, confess the dart ?

DIONE.

I own the nymph is fairest of her race,
 Yet I unmov'd can on this beauty gaze,
 Mindful of former promise ; all that's dear,
 My thoughts, my dreams ; my ev'ry wish is there.
 Since then our hopes are lost ; let friendship's tie
 Calm our distress, and slighted love supply ;
 Let us together drive our fleecy store,
 And of ungrateful woman think no more.

LYCIDAS.

'Tis death alone can raze her from my breast.

LAURA.

Why shines thy love so far above the rest?
 Nature, 'tis true, in ev'ry outward grace,
 Her nicest hand employ'd; her lovely face
 With beauteous feature stamp'd; with rosy dyes
 Warm'd her fair cheek; with lightning arm'd her eyes:
 But if thou search the secrets of her mind,
 Where shall thy cheated soul a virtue find?
 Sure hell with cruelty her breast supply'd.
 How did she glory when Menalcas dy'd!
 Pride in her bosom reigns; she's false, she's vain;
 She first entices, then insults the swain;
 Shall female cunning lead thy heart astray?
 Shepherd, be free; and scorn for scorn repay.

LYCIDAS.

How woman talks of woman!

DIONE.

—————Hence depart;
 Let a long absence cure thy love-sick heart.
 To some far grove retire, her sight disclaim,
 Nor with her charms awake the dying flame.
 Let not an hour thy happy flight suspend;
 But go not, Lycidas, without thy friend.
 Together let us seek the cheerful plains,
 And lead the dance among the sportive swains,
 Devoid of care.

LAURA.

—————Or else the groves disdain,
 Nor with the sylvan walk indulge thy pain.

Haste to the town; there (I have oft' been told)
 The courtly nymph her tresses binds with gold,
 To captivate the youths; the youths appear
 In fine array; in ringlets waves their hair
 Rich with ambrosial scents, the fair to move,
 And all the business of the day is love.
 There from the gaudy train select a dame,
 Her willing glance shall catch an equal flame.

LYCIDAS.

Name not the court.—the thought my soul confounds,
 And with Dione's wrongs my bosom wounds.
 Heav'n justly vindicates the faithful maid;
 And now are all my broken vows repaid.
 Perhaps she now laments my fancy'd death
 With tears unfeign'd; and thinks my gasping breath
 Sigh'd forth her name. O guilt, no more upbraid!
 Yes. I fond innocence and truth betray'd. [Aside.
 [Dione and Laura apart.

DIONE.

Hark! how reflection wakes his conscious heart.
 From my pale lids the trickling sorrows start;
 How shall my breast the swelling sighs confine!

LAURA.

O smooth thy brow, conceal our just design:
 Be yet a while unknown. If grief arise,
 And force a passage through thy gushing eyes,
 Quickly retire, thy sorrows to compose;
 Or with a look serene disguise thy woes.

[Dione is going out. Laura walks at a distance.

LYCIDAS.

Canst thou, Alexis, leave me thus distressed?
 Where's now the boasted friendship of thy breast?

Hast thou not oft' survey'd the dappled deer
In social herds o'er-spread the pastures fair,
When op'ning hounds the warmer scent pursue,
And force the destin'd victim from the crew,
Oft' he returns, and fain would join the band,
While all their horns the panting wretch withstand?
Such is thy friendship; thus might I confide.

D I O N E.

Why wilt thou censure what thou ne'er hast try'd?
Sooner shall swallows leave their callow brood,
Who with their plaintive chirpings cry for food;
Sooner shall hens expose their infant care,
When the spread kite sails wheeling in the air,
Than I forsake thee when by danger prest;
Wrong not by jealous fears a faithful breast.

L Y C I D A S.

If thy fair-spoken tongue thy bosom shows,
There let the secrets of my soul repose.

D I O N E.

Far be suspicion; in my truth confide,
O let my heart thy load of cares divide!

L Y C I D A S.

Know then, Alexis, that in vain I strove
To break her chain, and free my soul from love;
On the lim'd twig thus finches beat their wings,
Still more entangled in the clammy strings.
The slow-pac'd days have witness'd my despair,
Upon my weary couch sits wakeful care;
Down my flush'd cheek the flowing sorrows run,
As dews descend to weep the absent fun.
O lost Parthenia!

DIONE.

These wild thoughts suspend;
And in thy kind commands instruct thy friend.

LYCIDAS.

Whene'er my faltering tongue would urge my cause,
Deaf is her ear, and sullen she withdraws.
Go then, Alexis, seek the scornful maid,
In tender eloquence my suff'rings plead;
Of slighted passion you the pangs have known;
O judge my secret anguish by your own!

DIONE.

Had I the skill inconstant hearts to move,
My longing soul had never lost my love.
My feeble tongue, in these soft arts untry'd,
Can ill support the thunder of her pride;
When she shall bid me to thy bower repair,
How shall my trembling lips her threats declare!
How shall I tell thee, that she could behold,
With brow serene, thy corse all pale and cold
Beat on the dashing billow? shouldst thou go
Where the tall hill o'er-hangs the rocks below,
Near thee thy tyrant could unpitying stand,
Nor call thee back, nor stretch a saving hand.
Wilt thou then still persist to tempt thy fate,
To feed her pride and gratify her hate?

LYCIDAS.

Know, unexperienc'd youth, that woman's mind
Of't shifts her passions, like the inconstant wind;
Sudden she rages, like the troubled main,
Now sinks the storm, and all is calm again.
Watch the kind moment, then my wrongs impart,
And the soft tale shall glide into her heart.

DIONE.

No. Let her wander in the lonely grove,
 And never hear the tender voice of love.
 Let her a while, neglected by the swain,
 Pass by, nor sighs molest the cheerful plain;
 Thus shall the fury of her pride be laid;
 Thus humble into love the haughty maid.

LYCIDAS.

Vain are attempts my passion to controul.
 Is this the balm to cure my fainting soul?

DIONE.

Deep then among the green-wood shades I'll rove,
 And seek with weary'd pace thy wander'd love;
 Prostrate I'll fall, and with incessant prayers
 Hang on her knees, and bathe her feet with tears;
 If sighs of pity can her ear incline,
 (O Lycidas, my life is wrapt in thine!)

[Aside.

I'll charge her from thy voice to hear the tale,
 Thy voice more sweet than notes along the vale
 Breath'd from the warbling pipe: the moving strain
 Shall stay her flight, and conquer her disdain.
 Yet if she hear; should love the message speed,
 Then dies all hope;—then must Dione bleed.

[Aside.

LYCIDAS.

Haste then, dear faithful swain. Beneath those yews
 Whose sable arms the brownest shade diffuse,
 Where all around, to shun the fervent sky,
 The panting flocks in ferny thickets lie;
 There with impatience shall I wait my friend,
 Or the wide prospect frequent glances send

To spy thy wish'd return. As thou shalt find
A tender welcome, may thy love be kind!

[Ex. Lycidas.

S C E N E VI.

DIONE. LAURA.

DIONE.

Methinks I'm now surrounded by despair,
And all my with'ring hopes are loit in air.
Thus the young linnet on the rocking bough
Hears through long woods autumnal tempests blow,
With hollow blasts the clashing branches bend,
And yellow show'rs of rustling leaves descend:
She sees the friendly shelter from her fly,
Nor dare her little pinions trust the sky;
But on the naked spray and wintry air,
All shiv'ring, hopeless, mourns the dying year.
What have I promis'd? rash, unthinking maid!
By thy own tongue thy wishes are betray'd!

[Laura advances.

LAURA.

Why walk'st thou thus disturb'd with frantic air?
Why roll thy eyes with madness and despair?

DIONE.

[Musing.

How wilt thou bear to see her pride give way?
When thus the yielding nymph shall bid thee say,
'Let not the shepherd seek the silent grave,
'Say, that I bid him live.——If hope can save.

LAURA.

Hath he discern'd thee through the swain's disguise,
And now alike thy love and friendship flies?

DIONE.

Yes. Firm and faithful to the promise made,
I'll range each sunny hill, each lawn and glade.

LAURA.

'Tis Laura speaks. O calm your troubled mind.

DIONE.

Where shall my search this envy'd beauty find?
I'll go, my faithless shepherd's cause to plead,
And with my tears accuse the rival maid.
Yet, should her soften'd heart to love incline!

LAURA.

If those are all thy fears; Evander's thine.

DIONE.

Why should we both in sorrow waste our days?
If love unfeign'd my constant bosom sways,
His happiness alone is all I prize,
And that is center'd in Parthenia's eyes.
Haste then, with earnest zeal her love implore,
To bless his hours;—when thou shalt breathe no more.

A C T III. S C E N E I.

DIONE lying on the ground by the side of a fountain.

DIONE.

HERE let me rest, and in the liquid glass
View with impartial look my fading face.
Why are Parthenia's striking beauties priz'd?
And why Dione's weaker glance despis'd?
Nature in various molds has beauty cast,
And form'd the feature for each different taste:
This sighs for golden locks and azure eyes;
That, for the gloss of sable tresses, dyes.
Let all mankind these locks, these eyes detest;
So I were lovely in Evander's breast!
When o'er the garden's knot we cast our view,
While summer paints the ground with various hue;
Some praise the gaudy tulip's streaky red,
And some the silver lily's bending head;
Some the junquil in shining yellow drest,
And some the fring'd carnation's varied vest;
Some love the sober violet's purple dyes.
Thus beauty fares in different lovers eyes.
But bright Parthenia like the rose appears,
She in all eyes superior lustre bears.

S C E N E II.

DIONE. LAURA.

LAURA.

Why thus beneath the silver willow laid,
Weeps fair Dione in the pensive shade?
Hast thou yet found the over-arching bower,
Which guards Parthenia from the sultry hour?

DIONE.

With weary step in paths unknown I stray'd,
And sought in vain the solitary maid.

LAURA.

Seest thou the waving tops of yonder woods,
Whose aged arms imbrown the cooling floods?
The cooling floods o'er breaking pebbles flow,
And wash the soil from the big roots below;
From the tall rock the dashing waters bound.
Hark, o'er the fields the rushing billows sound!
There, lost in thought, and leaning on her crook;
Stood the sad nymph, nor rais'd her pensive look;
With settled eye the bubbling waves survey'd,
And watch'd the whirling eddys, as they play'd.

DIONE.

Thither to know my certain doom I speed,
For by this sentence life or death's decreed. [Exit.

S C E N E III.

LAURA. CLEANTHES.

LAURA.

But see! some hasty stranger bends this way;
 His broider'd vest reflects the sunny ray:
 Now through the thinner boughs I mark his mien,
 Now veil'd, in thicker shades he moves unseen.
 Hither he turns; I hear a muttering sound;
 Behind this rev'rend oak with ivy bound
 Quick I'll retire; with busy thought possess'd,
 His tongue betrays the secrets of his breast.

[She hides herself.]

CLEANTHES.

The skilful hunter with experienc'd care
 Traces the doubles of the circling hare;
 The subtle fox, (who breathes the weary hound
 O'er hills and plains) in distant brakes is found;
 With ease we tract swift hinds and skipping roes,
 But who th' inconstant ways of woman knows?
 They say, she wanders with the sylvan train,
 And courts the native freedoms of the plain;
 Shepherds explain their wish without offence,
 Nor blush the nymphs;—for love is innocence.
 O lead me where the rural youth retreat,
 Where the slope hills the warbling voice repeat.
 Perhaps on daisy'd turf reclines the maid,
 And near her side some rival clown is laid,

Yet, yet I love her.—O lost nymph return,
 Let not thy fire with tears incessant mourn;
 Return, lost nymph; bid sorrow cease to flow,
 And let Dione glad the house of woe.

LAURA.

Call'd he not lost Dione? hence I'll start,
 Cross his slow steps, and sift his op'ning heart. [Aside.

CLEANTHES.

Tell me, fair nymph, direct my wand'ring way;
 Where, in close bowers, to shun the sultry ray,
 Repose the swains; whose flocks with bleating fill
 The bord'ring forest and the thymy hill.
 But if thou frequent join those sylvan bands,
 Thy self can answer what my soul demands.

LAURA.

Seven years I trod these fields, these bowers and glades,
 And by the less'ning and the length'ning shades,
 Have mark'd the hours; what time my flock to lead
 To sunny mountains, or the watry mead:
 Train'd in the labours of the sylvan crew,
 Their sports, retreats, their cares and loves I knew.

CLEANTHES.

Instruct me then, if late among your race,
 A stranger nymph is found, of noble grace,
 In rural arts unskill'd, no charge she tends:
 Nor when the morn and ev'ning dew descends
 Milks the big-udder'd ewe. Her mien and dress
 The polish'd manners of the court confess.

LAURA.

Each day arrive the neighb'ring nymphs and swains
 To share the pastime of our jovial plains;

How can I there thy roving beauty trace,
Where not one nymph is bred of vulgar race?

CLEANTHES.

If yet she breathe, what tortures must she find!
The curse of disobedience tears her mind.
If e'er your breast with filial duty burn'd,
If e'er you sorrow'd when a parent mourn'd;
Tell her, I charge you, with incessant groans
Her drooping fire his absent child bemoans.

LAURA.

Unhappy man!

CLEANTHES.

————— With storms of passion tost,
When first he learnt his vagrant child was lost,
On the cold floor his trembling limbs he flung,
And with thick blows his hollow bosom rung;
Then up he started, and with fixt surprise,
Upon her picture threw his frantic eyes,
While thus he cry'd. ' In her my life was bound,
' Warm in each feature is her mother found!
' Perhaps despair has been her fatal guide,
' And now she floats upon the weeping tide;
' Or on the willow hung, with head reclin'd,
' All pale and cold she wavers in the wind.
' Did I not force her hence by harsh commands?
' Did not her soul abhor the nuptial bands?

LAURA.

Teach not, ye fires, your daughters to rebel,
By counsel reign their wills, but ne'er compel.

CLEANTHES.

Ye duteous daughters, trust these tender guides;
Nor think a parent's breast the tyrant hides.

LAURA.

From either lid the scalding sorrows roll;
The moving tale runs thrilling to my soul.

CLEANTHES.

Perhaps she wanders in the lonely woods,
Or on the sedge borders of the floods;
Thou know'st each cottage, forest, hill and vale,
And pebbled brook that winds along the dale.
Search each sequester'd dell to find the fair;
And just reward shall gratify thy care.

LAURA.

O ye kind boughs protect the virgin's flight,
And guard Dione from his prying sight! [Aside.

CLEANTHES.

Mean while I'll seek the shepherd's cool abodes,
Point me, fair nymph, along these doubtful roads.

LAURA.

Seest thou yon' mountain rear his shaggy brow?
In the green valley graze the flocks below:
There ev'ry gale with warbling music floats,
Shade answers shade, and breathes alternate notes.

[Exit Cleanthes.

He's gone; and to the distant vales is sent,
Nor shall his force Dione's love prevent.
But see, she comes again with hasty pace,
And conscious pleasure dimples on her face.

S C E N E IV.

L A U R A. D I O N E.

D I O N E.

I found her laid beside the crystal brook,
 Nor rais'd she from the stream her settled look,
 Till near her side I stood ; her head she rears,
 Starts sudden, and her shrieks confess her fears.

L A U R A.

Did not thy words her thoughtful soul surprize,
 And kindle sparkling anger in her eyes ?

D I O N E.

Thus she reply'd, with rage and scorn possess'd.
 ' Will importuning love ne'er give me rest ?
 ' Why am I thus in desarts wild pursued,
 ' Like guilty consciences when stain'd with blood ?
 ' Sure boding ravens, from the blasted oak,
 ' Shall learn the name of Lycidas to croak,
 ' To sound it in my ears ! as swains pass by,
 ' With look askance, they shake their heads and cry,
 ' Lo ! this is she for whom the shepherd dy'd !
 ' Soon Lycidas, a victim to her pride,
 ' Shall seek the grave ; and in the glimm'ring glade,
 ' With look all pale, shall glide the restless shade
 ' Of the poor swain ; while we with haggard eye
 ' And bristled hair the fleeting phantom fly.
 Still let their curses innocence upbraid :
 Heav'n never will forsake the virtuous maid.

L A U R A.

Didst thou persist to touch her haughty breast !

D I O N E.

She still the more disdain'd, the more I prest.

LAURA.

When you were gone, these walks a stranger crost,
 He turn'd through ev'ry path, and wander'd lost;
 To me he came; with courteous speech demands
 Beneath what bowers repos'd the shepherd bands;
 Then further asks me, if among that race
 A shepherdefs was found of courtly grace;
 With profer'd bribes my faithful tongue essays;
 But for no bribe the faithful tongue betrays.
 In me Dione's safe. Far hence he speeds,
 Where other hills resound with other reeds.

DIONE.

Should he come back; suspicion's jealous eyes
 Might trace my feature through the swain's disguise.
 Now ev'ry noise and whistling wind I dread,
 And in each sound approaches human tread.

LAURA.

He said, he left your house involv'd in cares,
 Sighs swell'd each breast, each eye o'erflow'd with
 For his lost child thy pensive father mourns, [tears;
 And sunk in sorrow to the dust returns.
 Go back, obedient daughter; hence depart,
 And still the sighs that tear his anxious heart.
 Soon shall Evander, wearied with disdain,
 Forego these fields, and seek the town again.

DIONE.

Think, Laura, what thy hasty thoughts persuade.
 If I return, to love a victim made,
 My wrathful fire will force his harsh command,
 And with Cleanthes join my trembling hand.

LAURA.

Trust a fond father; raise him from despair,

DIONE.

I fly not him; I fly a life of care.
 On the high nuptials of the court look round;
 Where shall, alas, one happy pair be found!
 There marriage is for servile int'rest sought:
 Is love for wealth or power or title bought?
 'Tis hence domestic jars their peace destroy,
 And loose adult'ry steals the shameful joy.
 But search we wide o'er all the blissful plains,
 Where love alone, devoid of int'rest, reigns.
 What concord in each happy pair appears!
 How fondness strengthens with the rolling years!
 Superior power ne'er thwarts their soft delights,
 Nor jealous accusations wake their nights.

LAURA.

May all those blessings on Dione fall.

DIONE.

Grant me Evander, and I share them all.
 Shall a fond parent give perpetual strife,
 And doom his child to be a wretch for life?
 Though he bequeath'd me all these woods and plains,
 And all the flocks the russet down contains;
 With all the golden harvests of the year,
 Far as where yonder purple mountains rear;
 Can these the broils of nuptial life prevent?
 Can these, without Evander, give content?
 But see, he comes.

LAURA.

————— I'll to the vales repair,
 Where wanders by the stream my fleecy care.
 May'st thou the rage of this new flame controul,
 And wake Dione in his tender soul! [Ex. Laura.

SCENE V.

DIONE. LYCIDAS,

LYCIDAS.

Say, my Alexis, can thy words impart
Kind rays of hope to chear a doubtful heart?
How didst thou first my pangs of love disclose?
Did her disdainful brow confirm my woes?
Or did soft pity in her bosom rise,
Heave on her breast, and languish in her eyes?

DIONE.

How shall my tongue the falt'ring tale explain!
My heart drops blood to give the shepherd pain.

LYCIDAS.

Pronounce her utmost scorn; I come prepar'd
To meet my doom. Say, is my death declar'd?

DIONE.

Why should thy fate depend on woman's will?
Forget this tyrant, and be happy still.

LYCIDAS.

Didst thou beseech her not to speed her flight,
Nor shun with wrathful glance my hated sight?
Will she consent my sighing plaint to hear,
Nor let my piercing crys be lost in air?

DIONE.

Can mariners appease the tossing storm,
When foaming waves the yawning deep deform?
When o'er the sable cloud the thunder flies,
Say, who shall calm the terror of the skies?

Who shall the lion's famish'd roar assuage;
 And can we still proud woman's stronger rage?
 Soon as my faithful tongue pronounc'd thy name,
 Sudden her glances shot resentful flame:
 Be dumb, she cries, this whining love give o'er,
 And vex me with the teasing theme no more.

LYCIDAS.

'Tis pride alone that keeps alive her scorn,
 On the mean swain in humble cottage born,
 Can poverty that haughty heart obtain
 Where avarice and strong ambition reign?
 If poverty pass by in tatter'd coat,
 Curs vex his heels and stretch their barking throat;
 If chance he mingle in the female croud,
 Pride tosses high her head, scorn laughs aloud;
 Each nymph turns from him to her gay gallant,
 And wonders at the impudence of want.
 'Tis vanity that rules all woman-kind,
 Love is the weakest passion of their mind.

DIONE.

Though one is by those servile views possess'd,
 O Lycidas, condemn not all the rest.

LYCIDAS.

Though I were bent beneath a load of years,
 And seventy winters thin'd my hoary hairs;
 Yet if my olive branches dropt with oil,
 And crooked shares were brighten'd in my soil,
 If lowing herds my fat'ning meads possess'd,
 And my white fleece the tawny mountain dress'd;
 Then would she lure me with love-darting glance,
 Then with fond mercenary smiles advance.

Though hell with ev'ry vice my soul had stain'd,
And froward anger in my bosom reign'd,
Though avarice my coffers cloath'd in rust,
And my joints trembled with enfeebled lust;
Yet were my antient name with titles great,
How would she languish for the gaudy bait!
If to her love all-tempting wealth pretend,
What virtuous woman can her heart defend?

D I O N E.

Conquests, thus meanly bought, men soon despise,
And justly slight the mercenary prize.

L Y C I D A S.

I know these frailties in her breast reside,
Direct her glance and ev'ry action guide,
Still let Alexis' faithful friendship aid,
Once more attempt to bend the stubborn maid.
Tell her, no base-born swain provokes her scorn,
No clown, beneath the sedgey cottage born;
Tell her, for her this sylvan dress I took,
For her my name and pomp of courts forsook;
My lofty roofs with golden sculpture shine,
And my high birth descends from antient line.

D I O N E.

Love is a sacred voluntary fire,
Gold never bought that pure, that chaste desire.
Who thinks true love for lucre to possess,
Shall grasp false flatt'ry and the feign'd cares;
Can we believe that mean, that servile wife,
Who vilely sells her dear-bought love for life,
Would not her virtue for an hour resign,
If in her sight the proser'd treasure shine?

LYCIDAS.

Can reason (when by winds swift fires are born
O'er waving harvests of autumnal corn)
The driving fury of the flame reprove?
Who then shall reason with a heart in love?

DIONE.

Yet let me speak; O may my words persuade
The noble youth, to quit this sylvan maid!
Resign thy crook, no more to plains resort,
Look round on all the beauties of the court;
There shall thy merit find a worthy flame,
Some nymph of equal wealth and equal name.
Think, if these offers should thy wish obtain,
And should the rustic beauty stoop to gain;
Thy heart could ne'er prolong th' unequal fire,
The sudden blaze would in one year expire;
Then thy rash folly thou too late shalt chide,
To poverty and base-born blood ally'd;
Her vulgar tongue shall animate the strife,
And hourly discord vex thy future life.

LYCIDAS.

Such is the force thy faithful words impart,
That like the galling goad they pierce my heart.
You think fair virtue in my breast resides,
That honest truth my lips and actions guides,
Deluded shepherd, could you view my soul,
You'd see it with deceit and treach'ry foul?
I'm base, perfidious. Ere from court I came,
Love singled from the train a beauteous dame;
The tender maid my fervent vows believ'd,
My fervent vows the tender maid deceiv'd.

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Why dost thou tremble?—why thus heave thy sighs?
Why steal the silent sorrows from thy eyes?

DIONE.

Sure the soft lamb hides rage within his breast,
And cooing turtles are with hate possess'd;
When from so sweet a tongue flow fraud and lies,
And those meek looks a perjur'd heart disguise.
Ah! who shall now on faithless man depend?
The treach'rous lover proves as false a friend.

LYCIDAS.

When with Dione's love my bosom glow'd,
Firm constancy and truth sincere I vow'd;
But since Parthenia's brighter charms were known,
My love, my constancy and truth are flown.

DIONE.

Are not thy hours with conscious anguish stung?
Swift vengeance must o'ertake the perjur'd tongue.
The gods the cause of injur'd love assert,
And arm with stubborn pride Parthenia's heart.

LYCIDAS.

Go, try her; tempt her with my birth and state,
Stronger ambition will subdue her hate.

DIONE.

O rather turn thy thoughts on that lost maid,
Whose hourly sighs thy faithless oath upbraid!
Think you behold her at the dead of night,
Plac'd by the glimm'ring taper's paly light,
With all your letters spread before her view,
While trickling tears the tender lines bedew;
Sobbing she reads the perjuries o'er and o'er,
And her long nights know peaceful sleep no more.

LYCIDAS,

Let me forget her.

DIONE.

———O false youth, relent;
 Think should Parthenia to thy hopes consent;
 When Hymen joins your hands, and music's voice
 Makes the glad echoes of thy domes rejoice,
 Then shall Dione force the crouded hall,
 Kneel at thy feet and loud for justice call;
 Could you behold her weltring on the ground,
 The purple dagger reeking from the wound?
 Could you unmov'd this dreadful sight survey?
 Such fatal scenes shall stain thy bridal day.

LYCIDAS.

The horrid thought sinks deep into my soul,
 And down my cheek unwilling sorrows roll.

DIONE.

From this new flame you may as yet recede,
 Or have you doom'd that guiltless maid shall bleed?

LYCIDAS.

Name her no more.—Haste, seek the sylvan fair.

DIONE.

Should the rich profer tempt her list'ning ear,
 Bid all your peace adieu. O barb'rous youth,
 Can you forego your honour, love and truth?
 Yet should Parthenia wealth and title slight,
 Would justice then restore Dione's right?
 Would you then dry her ever-falling tears;
 And bless with honest love your future years?

LYCIDAS.

I'll in yon' shade thy wish'd return attend;
 Come, quickly come, and cheer thy sighing friend.

[Exit Lycidas.]

DIONE.

Should her proud soul resist the tempting bait,
 Should she content in his profer'd wealth and state,
 Then I once more his perjur'd heart may move,
 And in his bosom wake the dying love.
 As the pale wretch involv'd in doubts and fears,
 All trembling in the judgment-hall appears;
 So shall I stand before Parthenia's eyes,
 For as she dooms, Dione lives or dies.

A C T IV. S C E N E I.

LYCIDAS. PARTHENIA asleep in a bower,

LYCIDAS.

MAY no rude wind the rustling branches move;
 Breathe soft, ye silent gales, nor wake my love.
 Ye shepherds, piping homeward on the way,
 Let not the distant echoes learn your lay;
 Strain not, ye nightingales, your warbling throat,
 May no loud shake prolong the shriller note,
 Lest she awake; O sleep, secure her eyes,
 That I may gaze; for if she wake, she flies.
 While easy dreams compose her peaceful soul,
 What anxious cares within my bosom roll!
 If tir'd with sighs beneath the beech I lye,
 And languid slumber close my weeping eye,
 Her lovely vision rises to my view,
 Swift flies the nymph, and swift would I pursue;
 I strive to call; my tongue has lost its sound;
 Like rooted oaks, my feet benumb'd are bound;
 Struggling I wake. Again my sorrows flow,
 And not one flatt'ring dream deludes my woe.
 What innocence! how meek is ev'ry grace!
 How sweet the smile that dimples on her face,
 Calm as the sleeping seas! but should my sighs
 Too rudely breathe, what angry storms would rise!
 Though the fair rose with beauteous blush is crown'd,
 Beneath her fragrant leaves the thorn is found;

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The peach, that with inviting crimson blooms,
 Deep at the heart the cank'ring worm consumes;
 'Tis thus, alas! those lovely features hide
 Disdain and anger and resentful pride.

S C E N E II.

LYCIDAS. DIONE. PARTHENIA.

LYCIDAS.

Hath profer'd greatness yet o'ercome her hate?
 And does she languish for the glitt'ring bait?
 Against the swain she might her pride support.
 Can she subdue her sex, and scorn a court?
 Perhaps in dreams the shining vision charms,
 And the rich bracelet sparkles on her arms;
 In fancy'd heaps the golden treasure glows:
 Parthenia, wake, all this thy swain bestows.

DIONE.

Sleeps she in these close bowers?

LYCIDAS.

———Lo! there she lies.

DIONE.

O may no startling sound unseal her eyes,
 And drive her hence away. 'Till now, in vain
 I trod the winding wood and weary plain.
 Hence, Lycidas; beyond those shades repose,
 While I thy fortune and thy birth disclose.

LYCIDAS.

May I Parthenia to thy friendship owe!

DIONE.

O rather think on lost Dione's woe!

Must she thy broken faith for ever mourn,
And will that juster passion ne'er return?

LYCIDAS.

Upbraid me not; but go. her slumbers chase;
And in her view the bright temptation place.

[Exit Lycidas.

S C E N E III.

DIONE. PARTHENIA.

DIONE.

Now flames the western sky with golden beams,
And the ray kindles on the quiv'ring streams;
Long flights of crows, high croaking from their food,
Now seek the nightly covert of the wood;
The tender grass with dewy crystal bends,
And gath'ring vapour from the heath ascends.
Shake off this downy rest; wake, gentle maid,
Trust not thy charms beneath the noxious shade.
Parthenia, rise.

PARTHENIA.

—————What voice alarms my ear?
Away. Approach not. Hah! Alexis there!
Let us together to the vales descend,
And to the folds our bleating charge attend;
But let me hear no more that shepherd's name,
Vex not my quiet with his hateful flame.

DIONE.

Can I behold him gasping on the ground,
And seek no healing herb to staunch the wound?

For thee continual sighs consume his heart,
 'Tis you alone can cure the bleeding smart.
 Once more I come the moving cause to plead,
 If still his sufferings cannot intercede,
 Yet let my friendship do his passion right,
 And show thy lover in his native light.

PARTHENIA.

Why in dark myst'ry are thy words involv'd?
 If Lycidas you mean; know, I'm resolv'd.

DIONE.

Let not thy kindling rage my words restrain.
 Know then; Parthenia flights no vulgar swain.
 For thee he bears the scrip and sylvan crook,
 For thee the glories of a court forsook.
 May not thy heart the wealthy flame decline!
 His honours, his possessions, all are thine.

PARTHENIA.

If he's a courtier, O ye nymphs, beware;
 Those who most promise are the least sincere.
 The quick-ey'd hawk shoots headlong from above,
 And in his pounces bears the trembling dove;
 The pilf'ring wolf o'er-leaps the fold's defence,
 But the false courtier preys on innocence.
 If he's a courtier, O ye nymphs, beware;
 Those who most promise are the least sincere.

DIONE.

Alas! thou ne'er hast prov'd the sweets of state,
 Nor known that female pleasure, to be great.
 'Tis for the town ripe clusters load the poles,
 And all our autumn crowns the courtier's bowles;
 For him our woods the red-ey'd pheasant breed,
 And annual coveys in our harvest feed;

For him with fruit the bending branch is stor'd,
 Plenty pours all her blessings on his board,
 If (when the market to the city calls)
 We chance to pass beside his palace walls,
 Does not his hall with music's voice resound,
 And the floor tremble with the dancer's bound?
 Such are the pleasures Lycidas shall give,
 When thy relenting bosom bids him live.

P A R T H E N I A.

See yon gay goldfinch hop from spray to spray,
 Who sings a farewell to the parting day;
 At large he flies o'er hill and dale and down:
 Is not each bush, each spreading tree his own?
 And canst thou think he'll quit his native brier,
 For the bright cage o'er-arch'd with golden wire?
 What then are honours, pomp and gold to me?
 Are those a price to purchase liberty!

D I O N E.

Think, when the Hymeneal torch shall blaze,
 And on the solemn rites the virgins gaze;
 When thy fair locks with glitt'ring gems are grac'd,
 And the bright zone shall sparkle round thy waste,
 How will their hearts with envious sorrow pine,
 When Lycidas shall join his hand to thine!

P A R T H E N I A.

And yet, Alexis, all that pomp and show
 Are oft' the varnish of internal woe.
 When the chaste lamb is from her sisters led,
 And interwoven garlands paint her head;
 The gazing flock, all envious of her pride,
 Behold her skipping by the priests' side;

Each hopes the flow'ry wreath with longing eyes ;
 While she, alas ! is led to sacrifice !
 Thus walks the bride in all her state array'd,
 The gaze and envy of each thoughtless maid.

D I O N E.

As yet her tongue resists the tempting snare,
 And guards my panting bosom from despair. [Aside.
 Can thy strong soul this noble flame forego ?
 Must such a lover waste his life in woe ?

P A R T H E N I A.

Tell him, his gifts I scorn ; not all his art,
 Not all his flattery shall seduce my heart.
 Courtiers, I know, are disciplin'd to cheat,
 Their infant-lips are taught to lisp deceit ;
 To prey on easy nymphs they range the shade,
 And vainly boast of innocence betray'd ;
 Chaste hearts, unlearn'd in falshood, they assail,
 And think our ear will drink the grateful tale :
 No. Lycidas shall ne'er my peace destroy,
 I'll guard my virtue, and content enjoy.

D I O N E.

So strong a passion in my bosom burns,
 Whene'er his soul is griev'd, Alexis mourns !
 Canst thou this importuning ardor blame ?
 Would not thy tongue for friendship urge the same ?

P A R T H E N I A.

Yes, blooming swain. You show an honest mind ;
 I see it, with the purest flame refin'd.
 Who shall compare love's mean and gross desire
 To the chaste zeal of friendship's sacred fire ?
 By whining love our weakness is confess'd ;
 But stronger friendship shows a virtuous breast.

In folly's heart the short-liv'd blaze may glow,
 Wisdom alone can purer friendship know.
 Love is a sudden blaze which soon decays,
 Friendship is like the sun's eternal rays;
 Not daily benefits exhaust the flame,
 It still is giving, and still burns the same;
 And could Alexis from his soul remove
 All the low images of grosser love;
 Such mild, such gentle looks thy heart declare,
 Fain would my breast thy faithful friendship share.

D I O N E.

How dare you in the different sex confide?
 And seek a friendship which you ne'er have try'd?

P A R T H E N I A.

Yes, I to thee could give up all my heart.
 From thy chaste eye no wanton glances dart;
 Thy modest lips convey no thought impure,
 With thee may strictest virtue walk secure.

D I O N E.

Yet can I safely on the nymph depend,
 Whose unrelenting scorn can kill my friend?

P A R T H E N I A.

Accuse me not, who act a gen'rous part;
 Had I, like city maids, a fraudulent heart,
 Then had his proffers taught my soul to feign,
 Then had I vilely stoop'd to sordid gain,
 Then had I sigh'd for honours, pomp and gold,
 And for unhappy chains my freedom sold.
 If you would save him, bid him leave the plain,
 And to his native city turn again;
 There, shall his passion find a ready cure,
 There, not one dame resists the glitt'ring lure.

D I O N E.

All this I frequent urg'd, but urg'd in vain,
Alas ! thou only canst assuage his pain !

S C E N E IV.

D I O N E. P A R T H E N I A. L Y C I -
D A S, [listening.

L Y C I D A S.

Why stays Alexis ? can my bosom bear
Thus long alternate storms of hope and fear ?
Yonder they walk ; no frowns her brow disguise,
But love consenting sparkles in her eyes ;
Here will I listen, here, impatient wait.
Spare me, Parthenia, and resign thy hate. [Aside.

P A R T H E N I A.

When Lycidas shall to the court repair,
Still let Alexis love his fleecy care ;
Still let him choose cool grots and sylvan bowers,
And let Parthenia share his peaceful hours.

L Y C I D A S.

What do I hear ? my friendship is betray'd !
The treach'rous rival has seduc'd the maid. [Aside.

P A R T H E N I A.

With thee, where bearded goats descend the steep,
Or where, like winter's snow, the nibbling sheep
Clothe the slope hills : I'll pass the cheerful day,
And from thy reed my voice shall catch the lay.

But see, still ev'ning spreads her dusky wings,
The flocks, slow-moving from the misty springs,
Now seek their fold. Come, shepherd, let's away,
To close the latest labours of the day.

[Exeunt hand in hand.]

SCENE V.

LYCIDAS.

My troubled heart what dire disasters rend ?
A scornful mistress, and a treach'rous friend !
Would ye be cozen'd, more than woman can ;
Unlock your bosom to perfidious man.
One faithful woman have these eyes beheld,
And against her this perjur'd heart rebell'd :
But search as far as earth's wide bounds extend,
Where shall the wretched find one faithful friend ?

SCENE VI.

LYCIDAS. DIONE.

LYCIDAS.

Why starts the swain ? why turn his eyes away,
As if amidst his path the viper lay ?
Did I not to thy charge my heart confide ?
Did I not trust thee near Parthenia's side,
As here she slept ?

DIONE.

— She straight my call obey'd,
And downy slumber left the lovely maid !

As in the morn awakes the folded rose,
And all around her breathing colour throws ;
So wak'd Parthenia.

LYCIDAS.

----- Could thy guarded heart,
When her full beauty glow'd, put by the dart ?
Yet on Alexis let my soul depend.
'Tis most ungen'rous to suspect a friend ;
And thou, I hope, hast well that name profest.

DIONE.

O could thy piercing eye discern my breast !
Could'st thou the secrets of my bosom see,
There ev'ry thought is fill'd with cares for thee !

LYCIDAS.

Is there, against hypocrisy, defence,
Who clothes her words and looks with innocence !

[Aside.]

Say, shepherd, when you profer'd wealth and state,
Did not her scorn and suppled pride abate ?

DIONE.

As sparkling di'monds to the feather'd train,
Who scrape the winnow'd chaff in search of grain ;
Such to the shepherdefs the court appears :
Content she seeks, and spurns those glitt'ring cares,

LYCIDAS.

'Tis not in woman grandeur to despise,
'Tis not from courts, from me alone she flies.
Did not my passion suffer like disgrace,
While she believ'd me born of sylvan race ?
Dost thou not think, this proudest of her kind
Has to some rival swain her heart resign'd ?

DIONE.

No rival shepherd her disdain can move;
Her frozen bosom is averse to love.

LYCIDAS.

Say, art thou sure, that this ungrateful fair
Scorns all alike, bids all alike despair?

DIONE.

How can I know the secrets of her heart?

LYCIDAS.

Answer sincere, nor from the question start.
Say, in her glance was never love confess;
And is no swain distinguish'd from the rest?

DIONE.

O Lycidas, bid all thy troubles cease;
Let not a thought on her disturb thy peace.
May justice bid thy former passion wake;
Think how Dione suffers for thy sake:
Let not a broken oath thy honour stain,
Recall thy vows, and seek the town again.

LYCIDAS.

What means Alexis? where's thy friendship flown?
Why am I banish'd to the hateful town?
Hath some new shepherd warm'd Parthenia's breast?
And does my love his am'rous hours molest?
Is it for this thou bid'st me quit the plain?
Yes, yes, thou fondly lov'st this rival swain.
When first my cheated soul thy friendship woo'd,
To my warm heart I took the vip'rous brood.
O false Alexis!

DIONE.

Why am I accus'd?
Thy jealous mind is by weak fears abus'd.

LYCIDAS.

Was not thy bosom fraught with false design?
 Didst thou not plead his cause, and give up mine?
 Let not thy tongue evasive answer seek;
 The conscious crimson rises on thy cheek:
 Thy coward conscience, by thy guilt dismay'd,
 Shakes in each joint, and owns that I'm betray'd.

DIONE.

How my poor heart is wrong'd! O spare thy friend!

LYCIDAS.

Seek not detected falsehood to defend.

DIONE.

Beware; lest blind suspicion rashly blame.

LYCIDAS.

Own thyself then the rival of my flame.
 If this be she for whom Alexis pin'd,
 She now no more is to thy vows unkind,
 Behind the thicket's twisted verdure laid,
 I witness'd ev'ry tender thing she said;
 I saw bright pleasure kindle in her eyes,
 Love warm'd each feature at thy soft replies.

DIONE.

Yet hear me speak.

LYCIDAS.

— In vain is all defence.
 Did not thy treach'rous hand conduct her hence?
 Haste, from my sight, rage burns in ev'ry vein;
 Never approach my just revenge again.

DIONE.

O search my heart; there injur'd truth thou'lt find.

LYCIDAS.

Talk not of truth; long since she left mankind.

So smooth a tongue! and yet so false a heart!
 Sure courts first taught the fawning friendship's art.
 No. Thou art false by nature.

DIONE.

—Let me clear
 This heavy charge, and prove my trust sincere.

LYCIDAS.

Boast then her favours; say, what happy hour
 Next calls to meet her in th' appointed bower;
 Say when and where you met.

DIONE.

—Be rage suppress.
 In stabbing mine, you wound Parthenia's breast,
 She said, she still defy'd love's keenest dart;
 Yet purer friendship might divide her heart,
 Friendship's sincerer bands she wish'd to prove.

LYCIDAS.

A woman's friendship ever ends in love.
 Think not these foolish tales my faith command;
 Did not I see thee press her snowy hand?
 O may her passion like thy friendship last!
 May she betray thee ere the day be past!
 Hence then. Away. Thou'rt hateful to my sight,
 And thus I spurn the fawning hypocrite.

[Ex. Lycid.

SCENE VII.

DIONE.

Was ever grief like mine! O wretched maid!
 My friendship wrong'd! my constant love betray'd!

Misfortune haunts my steps where-e'er I go,
 And all my days are over-cast with woe.
 Long have I strove th' increasing load to bear,
 Now faints my soul, and sinks into despair.
 O lead me to the hanging mountain's cell,
 In whose brown cliffs the fowls of darkness dwell :
 Where waters, trickling down the rifted wall,
 Shall lull my sorrows with the tinkling fall.
 There, seek thy grave. How canst thou bear the light,
 When banish'd ever from Evander's sight !

S C E N E VIII.

DIONE. LAURA.

LAURA.

Why hangs a cloud of grief upon thy brows ?
 Does the proud nymph accept Evander's vows ?

DIONE.

Can I bear life with these new pangs oppress !
 Again he tears me from his faithless breast :
 A perjur'd lover first he sought these plains,
 And now my friendship like my love disdains.
 As I new offers to Parthenia made,
 Conceal'd he stood behind the woodbine shade.
 He says, my treach'rous tongue his heart betray'd,
 That my false speeches have misled the maid ;
 With groundless fear he thus his soul deceives ;
 What frenzy dictates, jealousy believes.

LAURA.

Resign thy crook, put off this manly vest,
 And let the wrong'd Dione stand confest ;

When he shall learn what sorrows thou hast born,
And find that naught relents Parthenia's scorn,
Sure he will pity thee.

DIONE.

————— No, Laura, no,
Should I, alas ! the sylvan drefs forego,
Then might he think that I her pride foment,
That injur'd love instructs me to resent ;
Our secret enterprize might fatal prove :
Man flies the plague of persecuting love.

LAURA.

Avoid Parthenia ; lest his rage grow warm,
And jealousy resolve some fatal harm.

DIONE.

O Laura, if thou chance the youth to find,
Tell him what torments vex my anxious mind ;
Should I once more his awful presence seek,
The silent tears would bath my glowing cheek ;
By rising sighs my falt'ring voice be stay'd,
And trembling fear too soon confess the maid.
Haste, Laura, then ; his vengeful soul assuage,
Tell him, I'm guiltless ; cool his blinded rage ;
Tell him, that truth sincere my friendship brought,
Let him not cherish one suspicious thought.
Then to convince him, his distrust was vain,
I'll never, never see that nymph again.
This way he went.

LAURA.

————— See, at the call of night,
The star of ev'ning sheds his silver light
High o'er yon western hill : the cooling gales
Fresh odours breathe along the winding dales ;

Far from their home as yet our shepherds stray,
To close with cheerful walk the sultry day.
Methinks from far I hear the piping swain;
Hark, in the breeze now swells, now sinks the strain;
Thither I'll seek him.

D I O N E.

————— While this length of glade
Shall lead me pensive through the sable shade;
Where on the branches murmur rushing winds,
Grateful as falling floods to love-sick minds.
O may this path to death's dark vale descend!
There only can the wretched hope a friend.

[Exeunt severally.]

ACT V. SCENE I.

A WOOD.

DIONE. CLEANTHES, (who lies wounded
in a distant part of the stage.)

DIONE.

THE moon serene now climbs th' aerial way;
See, at her sight ten thousand stars decay:
With trembling gleam she tips the silent grove,
While all beneath the chequer'd shadows move.
Turn back thy silver axles, downward roll,
Darkness best fits the horrors of my soul.
Rise, rise, ye clouds; the face of heav'n deform,
Veil the bright goddesses in a sable storm:
O look not down upon a wretched maid!
Let thy bright torch the happy lover aid,
And light his wand'ring footsteps to the bow'r,
Where the kind nymph attends th' appointed hour.
Yet thou hast seen unhappy love, like mine;
Did not thy lamp in heav'n's blue forehead shine,
When Thisbe sought her love along the glade?
Didst thou not then behold the gleaming blade,
And gild the fatal point that stabb'd her breast?
Soon I, like her, shall seek the realms of rest.
Let groves of mournful yew a wretch surround!
O sooth my ear with melancholy sound!
The village curs now stretch their yelling throat,
And dogs from distant cots return the note;

The rav'nous wolf along the valley prowls,
 And with his famish'd cries the mountain howls.
 But hark ! what sudden noise advances near ?
 Repeated groans alarm my frighted ear !

CLEANTHES.

Shepherd, approach ; ah ! fly not through the glade,
 A wretch all dy'd with wounds invokes thy aid.

DIONE.

Say then, unhappy stranger, how you bled ;
 Collect thy spirits, raise thy drooping head.

[Cleanthes raises himself on his arm.

O horrid sight ! Cleanthes gasping lies ;
 And death's black shadows float before his eyes.
 Unknown in this disguise, I'll check my woe,
 And learn what bloody hand has struck the blow.

[Aside.

Say, youth, ere fate thy feeble voice confounds,
 What led thee hither ? whence these purple wounds ?

CLEANTHES.

Stay, fleeting life ; may strength a while prevail,
 Lest my clos'd lips confine th' imperfect tale.
 Ere the streak'd east grew warm with amber ray,
 I from the city took my doubtful way,
 Far o'er the plains I sought a beauteous maid,
 Who from the court in these wide forests stray'd,
 Wanders unknown ; as I, with weary pain,
 Try'd ev'ry path, and op'ning glade in vain ;
 A band of thieves, forth rushing from the wood,
 Unsheath'd their daggers warm with daily blood ;
 Deep in my breast the barb'rous steel is dy'd,
 And purple hands the golden prey divide.

Hence are these mangling wounds. Say, gentle swain,
If thou hast known among the sylvan train
The vagrant nymph I seek?

DIONE.

—————What mov'd thy care,
Thus, in these pathless wilds to search the fair?

CLEANTHES:

I charge you, O ye daughters of the grove,
Ye Naiads, who the mossy fountains love,
Ye happy swains, who range the pastures wide,
Ye tender nymphs, who feed your flocks beside;
If my last gasping breath can pity move,
If e'er you knew the pangs of slighted love,
Show her I charge you, where Cleanthes dy'd,
The grass yet reeking with the sanguine tide.
A father's power to me the virgin gave,
But she disdain'd to live a nuptial slave;
So fled her native home.

DIONE!

—————'Tis then from thee
Springs the foul source of all her misery.
Could'st thou, thy selfish appetite to please,
Condemn to endless woes another's peace?

CLEANTHES.

O spare me; nor my hapless love upbraid,
While on my heart death's frozen hand is laid!
Go seek her, guide her where Cleanthes bled;
When she surveys her lover pale and dead,
Tell her, that since she fled my hateful sight,
Without remorse I sought the realms of night,
Methinks I see her view these poor remains,
And on her cheek indecent gladness reigns!

Full in her presence cold Cleanthes lies,
And not one tear stands trembling in her eyes !
O let a sigh my hapless fate deplore !
Cleanthes now controuls thy love no more.

DIONE.

How shall my lids confine these rising woes ?

[Aside.

CLEANTHES.

O might I see her, ere death's finger close
These eyes for ever ! might her soften'd breast
Forgive my love with too much ardor prest !
Then I with peace could yield my latest breath.

DIONE.

Shall I not calm the sable hour of death,
And show myself before him !—hah ! he dies.
See from his trembling lip the spirit flies ! [Aside.
Stay yet a-while. Dione stands confest.
He knows me not. He faints, he sinks to rest.

CLEANTHES.

Tell her, since all my hopes in her were lost,
That death was welcome—— [Dies.

DIONE.

What sudden gusts of grief my bosom rend ?
A parent's curses o'er my head impend
For disobedient vows ; O wretched maid,
Those very vows Evander hath betray'd.
See, at thy feet Cleanthes bath'd in blood !
For love of thee he trod this lonely wood ;
Thou art the cruel authress of his fate !
He falls by thine, thou by Evander's hate.
When shall my soul know rest ? Cleanthes slain
No longer sighs and weeps for thy disdain.

Thou still art curst with love. Bleed, virgin, bleed.
 How shall a wretch from anxious life be freed!
 My troubled brain with sudden frenzy burns,
 And shatter'd thought now this now that way turns.
 What do I see thus glitt'ring on the plains?
 Hah! the dread sword yet warm with crimson stains!

[Takes up the dagger.

S C E N E II.

DIONE. PARTHENIA.

PARTHENIA.

Sweet is the walk when night has cool'd the hour.
 This path directs me to my sylvan bower. [Aside.

DIONE.

Why is my soul with sudden fear dismay'd?
 Why drops my trembling hand the pointed blade?
 O string my arm with force! [Aside.

PARTHENIA.

—————Methought a noise
 Broke through the silent air, like human voice. [Aside.

DIONE.

One well-aim'd blow shall all my pangs remove,
 Grasp firm the fatal steel, and cease to love. [Aside.

PARTHENIA.

Sure 'twas Alexis, hah! a sword display'd.
 The streaming lustre darts a-cross the shade. [Aside.

DIONE.

May heav'n new vigour to my soul impart,
 And guide the desp'rate weapon to my heart! [Aside.

PARTHENIA.

May I the meditated death arrest!

[Holds Dione's hand.

Strike not rash shepherd; spare thy guiltless breast.
O give me strength to stay the threaten'd harm,
And wrench the dagger from his lifted arm!

D I O N E.

What cruel hand withholds the welcome blow?
In giving life, you but prolong my woe.
O may not thus th' expected stroke impend!
Unloose thy grasp, and let swift death descend.
But if yon murder thy red hands hath dy'd;
Here. Pierce me deep; let forth the vital tide.

[Dione quits the dagger.

P A R T H E N I A.

Wait not thy fate; but this way turn thy eyes;
My virgin hand no purple murder dies.
Turn then, Alexis; and Parthenia know,
'Tis she protects thee from the fatal blow,

D I O N E.

Must the night-watches by my sighs be told?
And must these eyes another morn behold
Through dazzling floods of tears? ungen'rous maid,
The friendly stroke is by thy hand delay'd;
Call it not mercy to prolong my breath;
'Tis but to torture me with lingring death.

P A R T H E N I A.

What moves thy hand to act this bloody part?
Whence are these gnawing pangs that tear thy heart;
Is that thy friend who lies before thee slain?
Is it his wound that reeks upon the plain?
Is't Lycidas?

D I O N E.

—————No. I the stranger found,
Ere chilly death his frozen tongue had bound.

He said; as at the rosy dawn of day,
 He from the city took his vagrant way,
 A murd'ring band pour'd on him from the wood,
 First seiz'd his gold, then bath'd their swords in blood.

P A R T H E N I A.

You, whose ambition labours to be great,
 Think on the perils which on riches wait.
 Safe are the shepherd's paths; when sober even
 Streaks with pale light the bending arch of heaven,
 From danger free, thro' desarts wild he hies,
 The rising smoke far o'er the mountain spies,
 Which marks his distant cottage; on he fares,
 For him no murd'ers lay their nightly snares;
 They pass him by, they turn their steps away;
 Safe poverty was ne'er the villain's prey.
 At home he lies secure in easy sleep,
 No bars his ivy-mantled cottage keep;
 No thieves in dreams the fancy'd dagger hold,
 And drag him to detect the buried gold;
 Nor starts he from his couch aghast and pale,
 When the door murmurs with the hollow gale.
 While he, whose iron coffers rust with wealth,
 Harbours beneath his roof deceit and stealth;
 Treach'ry with lurking pace frequents his walks,
 And close behind him horrid murder stalks.
 'Tis tempting lucre makes the villain bold,
 There lies a bleeding sacrifice to gold.

D I O N E.

To live is but to wake to daily cares,
 And journey through a tedious vale of tears.
 Had you not rush'd between, my life had flown;
 And I, like him, no more had sorrow known.

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PARTHENIA.

When anguish in the gloomy bosom dwells,
 The counsel of a friend the cloud dispells.
 Give thy breast vent, the secret grief impart,
 And say what woe lies heavy at thy heart.
 To save thy life kind heav'n has succour sent,
 The gods by me thy threaten'd fate prevent.

DIONE.

No. To prevent it, is beyond thy power;
 Thou only canst defer the welcome hour.
 When you the lifted dagger turn'd aside,
 Only one road to death thy force deny'd;
 Still fate is in my reach. From mountains high,
 Deep in whose shadow craggy ruins lie,
 Can I not headlong fling this weight of woe,
 And dash out life against the flints below?
 Are there not streams, and lakes and rivers wide,
 Where my last breath may bubble on the tide?
 No. Life shall never flatter me again,
 Nor shall to-morrow bring new sighs and pain.

PARTHENIA.

Can I this burden of thy soul relieve,
 And calm thy grief?

DIONE.

————— If thou wilt comfort give;
 Plight me thy word, and to that word be just;
 When poor Alexis shall be laid in dust,
 That pride no longer shall command thy mind,
 That thou wilt spare the friend I leave behind.
 I know his virtue worthy of thy breast.
 Long in thy love may Lycidas be blest!

P A R T H E N I A.

That swain (who would my liberty controul,
To please some short-liv'd transport of his soul)
Shows, while his importuning flame he moves,
That 'tis not me, himself alone he loves.
O live, nor leave him by misfortunes prest;
'Tis shameful to desert a friend distress.

D I O N E.

Alas! a wretch like me no loss would prove,
Would kind Parthenia listen to his love.

P A R T H E N I A.

Why hides thy bosom this mysterious grief?
Ease thy o'erburden'd heart, and hope relief.

D I O N E.

What profits it to touch thy tender breast,
With wrongs, like mine, which ne'er can be redrest?
Let in my heart the fatal secret dye,
Nor call up sorrow in another's eye!

S C E N E III.

D I O N E. P A R T H E N I A. L Y C I -
D A S.

L Y C I D A S.

If Laura right direct the darksome ways,
Along these paths the pensive shepherd strays.

[Aside.

D I O N E.

Let not a tear for me roll down thy cheek.
O would my throbbing sighs my heart-strings break!

Why was my breast the lifted stroke deny'd?

Must then again the deathful deed be try'd?

Yes. 'Tis resolv'd.

[Snatches the dagger from Parthenia.

PARTHENIA.

— Ah, hold; forbear, forbear!

LYCIDAS.

Methought distress with shrieks alarm'd my ear.

PARTHENIA.

Strike not. Ye gods, defend him from the wound.

LYCIDAS.

Yes. 'Tis Parthenia's voice, I know the sound.

Some sylvan ravisher would force the maid,

And Laura sent me to her virtue's aid.

Die, villain, die; and seek the shades below.

[Lycidas snatches the dagger from Dione,
and stabs her.

DIONE.

Whoe'er thou art, I bless thee for the blow.

LYCIDAS.

Since heav'n ordain'd this arm thy life should guard,

O hear my vows! be love the just reward.

PARTHENIA.

Rather let vengeance, with her swiftest speed

O'ertake thy flight, and recompense the deed!

Why stays the thunder in the upper sky?

Gather, ye clouds; ye forked lightnings, fly;

On thee may all the wrath of heav'n descend,

Whose barb'rous hand hath slain a faithful friend.

Behold Alexis!

LYCIDAS.

— Would that treach'rous boy

Have forc'd thy virtue to his brutal joy?

What rous'd his passion to this bold advance?
 Did e'er thy eyes confess one willing glance?
 I know, the faithless youth his trust betray'd;
 And well the dagger hath my wrongs repay'd.

DIONE. [Raising herself on her arm,
 Breaks not Evander's voice along the glade?
 Hah! is it he who holds the reeking blade!
 There needed not or poison, sword or dart;
 Thy faithless vows, alas! had broke my heart. [Aside.

PARTHENIA.
 O tremble, shepherd, for thy rash offence,
 The sword is dy'd with murder'd innocence!
 His gentle soul no brutal passion seiz'd,
 Nor at my bosom was the dagger rais'd;
 Self-murder was his aim; the youth I found
 Whelm'd in despair, and stay'd the falling wound.

DIONE.
 Into what mischiefs is the lover led,
 Who calls down vengeance on his perjur'd head!
 O may he ne'er bewail this desp'rate deed,
 And may, unknown, unwept, Dione bleed! [Aside.

LYCIDAS.
 What horrors on the guilty mind attend!
 His conscience had reveng'd an injur'd friend,
 Hadst thou not held the stroke. In death he fought
 To lose the heart-consuming pain of thought.
 Did not the smooth-tongu'd boy perfidious prove,
 Plead his own passion, and betray my love?

DIONE.
 O let him ne'er this bleeding victim know;
 Lest his rash transport, to revenge the blow,

Should in his dearer heart the dagger stain !
 That wound would pierce my soul with double pain.
 [Aside.

PARTHENIA.

How did his faithful lips (now pale and cold)
 With moving eloquence thy griefs unfold!

LYCIDAS.

Was he thus faithful ? thus, to friendship true ?
 Then I'm a wretch. All peace of mind, adieu !
 If ebbing life yet beat within thy vein,
 Alexis, speak ; unclothe those lids again.

[Flings himself on the ground near Dione.
 See at thy feet the barb'rous villain kneel !
 'Tis Lycidas who grasps the bloody steel,
 Thy once lov'd friend. — Yet e'er I cease to live,
 Canst thou a wretched penitent forgive ?

DIONÉ.

When low beneath the sable mold I rest,
 May a sincerer friendship share thy breast !
 Why are those heaving groans ? (ah ! cease to weep !)
 May my lost name in dark oblivion sleep ;
 Let this sad tale no speaking stone declare,
 From future eyes to draw a pitying tear.
 Let o'er my grave the lev'ling plough-share pass,
 Mark not the spot ; forget that e'er I was.
 Then may'st thou with Parthenia's love be blest,
 And not one thought on me thy joys molest !
 My swimming eyes are overpower'd with light,
 And darkning shadows fleet before my sight,
 May'st thou be happy ? ah ! my soul is free. [Dies.

LYCIDAS.

O cruel shepherdes, for love of thee [To Parthenia.
This fatal deed was done.

S C E N E the last.

LYCIDAS. PÄRTHENIA. LAURA.

LAURA.

Alexis slain!

LYCIDAS.

Yes. 'Twas I did it. See this crimson stain!
My hands with blood of innocence are dy'd.
O may the moon her silver beauty hide
In rolling clouds! my soul abhors the light;
Shade, shade the murd'rer in eternal night!

LAURA.

No rival shepherd is before thee laid;
There bled the chastest, the sincerest maid
That ever sigh'd for love. On her pale face,
Cannot thy weeping eyes the feature trace
Of thy once dear Dione? with wan care
Sunk are those eyes, and livid with despair.

LYCIDAS.

Dione!

LAURA.

There pure constancy lies dead!

LYCIDAS.

May heav'n shower vengeance on this perjur'd head!
As the dry branch that withers on the ground,
So, blasted be the hand that gave the wound!

Off; hold me not. This heart deserves the stroke;
 'Tis black with treach'ry. Yes: the vows are broke
 [Stabs himself.

Which I so often swore. Vain world, adieu!
 Though I was false in life, in death I'm true. [Dies,

LAURA.

To-morrow shall the funeral rites be paid,
 And these love-victims in one grave be laid.

PARTHENIA.

There shall the yew her sable branches spread,
 And mournful cypress rear her fringed head.

LAURA.

From thence shall thyme and myrtle send perfume,
 And laurel ever-green o'ershade the tomb.

PARTHENIA.

Come, Laura; let us leave this horrid wood,
 Where streams the purple grafs with lovers blood;
 Come to my bower. And as we sorrowing go,
 Let poor Dione's story feed my woe
 With heart-relieving tears.———

LAURA. [Pointing to Dione.

———Unhappy maid,
 Hadst thou a parent's just command obey'd,
 Thou yet hadst liv'd.——But who shall love advise?
 Love scorns command, and breaks all other ties.
 Henceforth, ye swains, be true to vows profess;
 For certain vengeance strikes the perjurd breast.

F I N I S.

Oh! hold me not. This heart delivers the broke;
 'Tis black with treach'ry. Yes: the vows are broke
 [Steps backward]

Which I so often swore. Vain world, adieu!
 Though I was false in life, in death I'm true. [Exit]

LARNA.

To-morrow shall the funeral rites be paid,
 And these love-vigils in one grave be laid.

PARTHENIA.

There shall the yew her sable branches spread,
 And mournful cyprès rear her ringed head.

LARNA.

From thence shall thyne and mine the land perfume,
 And launch ever-green o'erhanging the tomb.

PARTHENIA.

Come, Larnae; let us leave this horrid wood,
 Where streams the purple galls with lovers' blood;
 Come to my bower. And as we following go,

Let poor Dione's story feed my woes,
 With heart-relieving tears.

LARNA. [Pointing to Dione.]
 Unhappy maid!

Hadst thou a parent's just command obey'd,

Thou'st not hadst liv'd, — that who shall love advise!

I've learnt command, and broke all other ties.

Henceforth, ye swains, be true to vows profess;

For certain vengeance strikes the perjurer's breast.

E. I. M. I. S.